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CINE
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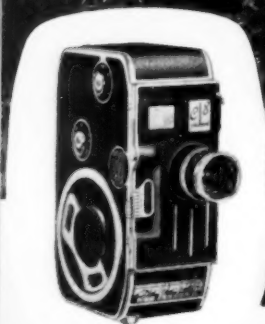
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In This Issue

ALL THE YEAR ROUND
EXPOSURE CHART

MAKING FAMILY AND
HOLIDAY FILMS

NEW WIDE SCREEN TECHNIQUE



BOLEX C8

Swiss Precision

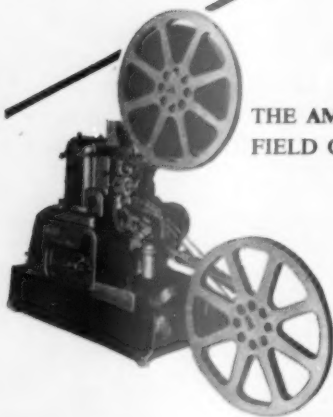
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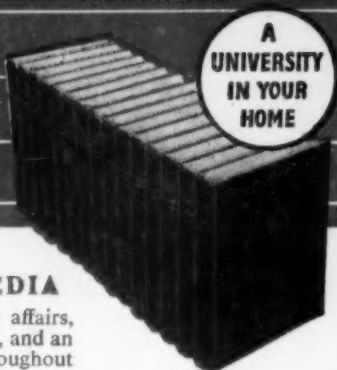
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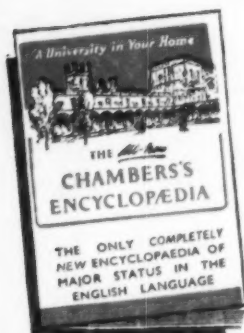
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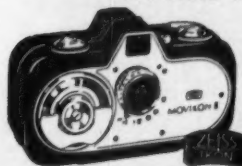
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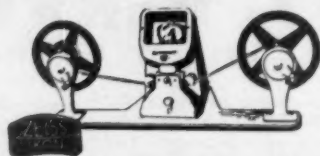
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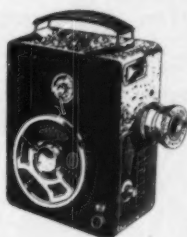
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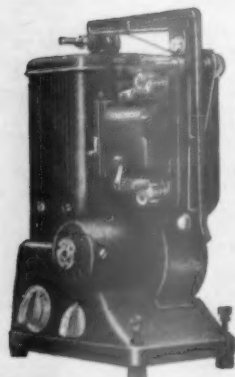
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50ft.	1/9	—	—	50ft.	1/9	—	—
100ft.	2/6	—	—	100ft.	2/9	1/-	—
200ft.	3/3	1/9	—	200ft.	3/3	1/9	—
400ft.	4/3	2/3	—	400ft.	4/3	2/3	4/-
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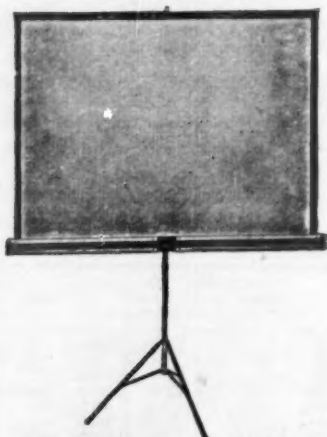
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Camera complete with 5 filters, built-in turret handle, new turret and f/1.5 lens £192 2 6

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C8 camera, f/2.8 foc., case ... £55 13 0
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Improvements include
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8mm. G.I.C., f/1.9 focusing lens	£33 10 0
9.5mm. Pathe H, f/2.5 lens	£18 0 0
16mm. Cine Kodak K, f/1.9 focusing lens, case	£58 0 0
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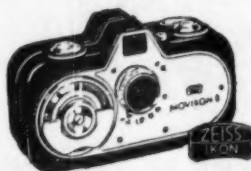
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The Sheffield Photo Co. Ltd. have such a large stock of Cine Cameras of all 3 sizes that we like to pick out some of the winners. In this issue of A.C.W. we have chosen to refer to 8 and 16mm. Cine Cameras.



8mm. Zeiss Movikon. For double run 8mm. film. Very easy and rapid loading. No sprockets or film rollers to thread. Easy cleaning and loops are self set. No parallax up to 3 feet. 16 f.p.s. and single picture device. Almost entirely silent running. New design gives very firm hold with perfect balance. At 8ft. distance by pre-setting the lens depth of focus extends from 5ft. to infinity. f/1.9 hard coated lens with click stops. Price £54 3 3

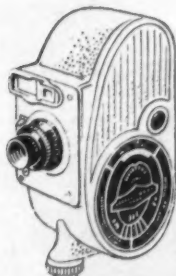
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9.5mm. Pathscope H Motocamera, with f/2.5 lens ... £22 0 0
 16mm. Zeiss Movikon Cine Camera, variable speeds, coupled Rangefinder, delayed action, f/1.4 Sonnar lens and case ... £95 0 0
 15mm. Wide Angle T.T.H. lens in Standard C Mount ... £12 10 0
 2in. f/3.5 Kodak Anastigmat lens in adaptor for Magazine Cine Kodak Camera ... £15 0 0
 15mm. f/2.7 Kodak Wide Angle lens for use with Magazine Cine Kodak or Special ... £22 10 0
 16mm. Paillard H16 Cine Camera with 1in. Meyer f/1.5 Primoplan lens, also 3in. f/3.5 Dallmeyer Telephoto lens and 15mm. f/1.5 Dallmeyer Wide Angle. Complete with case, £115 0 0
 16mm. Bell & Howell Model 129D projector with 750 watt lamp, transformer, Voltmeter Control and case ... £60 0 0

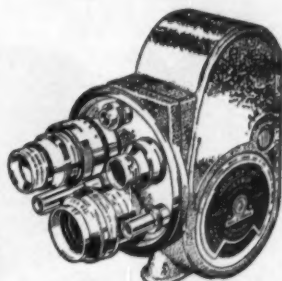
CINE FILM By return post.
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 16mm., 100ft. £3 12 10
 16mm. magazines 49/8

Limited stock 8mm. **BAUCHET** double run slightly outdated. 3 for 21/- plus postage.

We have quoted cash prices but would point out that we will gladly supply any Cine Camera on extended and simple payment terms. If you will state in which camera you are interested we will send full details and quote exact H.P. terms at the same time.



8mm. G.B. Bell Howell Sportster de luxe cine camera at a reduced and moderate price. Takes double run film. Easy and quick loading. 4 speeds 16, 32, 48, 64 f.p.s. Clear viewfinder with masks for 1in. and 1½in. lenses. Automatic and clear footage indicator. Single frame device. Exposure guide and safety wrist cord. f/2.5 T.T. & H. bloomed lens. With zip purse. Price ... £43 14 6



8mm. G.B. Bell Howell Viceroy 3 lens turret camera. Gives instant changeover from one lens to another with matched finders for each. 4 speeds including slow motion. The ideal cine camera for getting just what you want under all conditions. Lens combination to your choice. Price with T.T. & H. lens ... £59 2 7 with f/2.5 Mytal or with f/1.4 Ivotal lens ... £82 19 7

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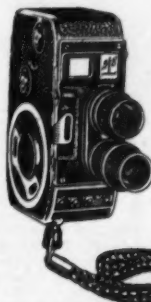
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Twin lens turret. Variable speeds 8-64 f.p.s. Multi-field viewfinder continuously variable (no masks). Audible warning sounds when film is running out. Single shots. Supplied complete with cable release. With f/1.9 lens

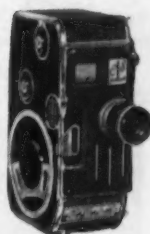
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Fitted with 12.5mm. f/2.5 lens. Easy loading, film gate opens and closes automatically. Variable speeds 16-64 f.p.s. and single picture operation. Complete exposure guide. Supplied complete with case and wrist-strap

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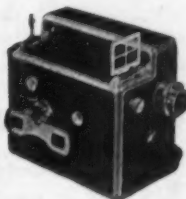
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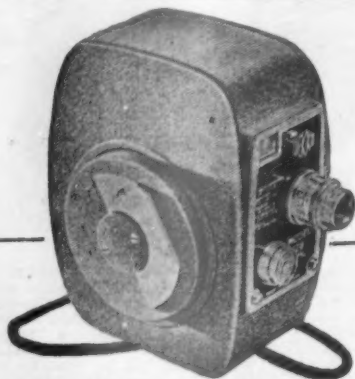
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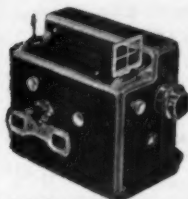
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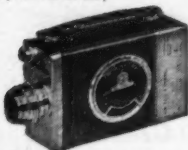


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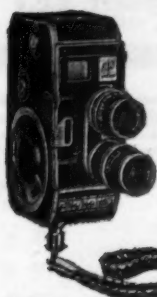
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AMATEUR CINE WORLD

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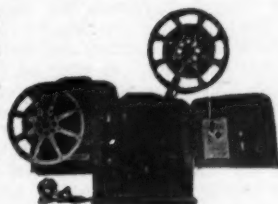
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Blazer Badges on the Way

When we first announced that, in response to an insistent demand which we could not ignore, A.C.W. badges were to be made available, we were positively bombarded with requests for other A.C.W. insignia as well—car badges and pennants, even caravan pennants, ties and blazer badges. By far the largest number of requests was for the last mentioned.

But while we welcomed the interest shown by these proposals, we thought it best to be cautious. Perhaps—we told ourselves—the news of the coming of the badge had stimulated happy flights of fancy centred round A.C.W. as the supplier of trophies and haberdashery. Perhaps those who so good-naturedly wrote us might later regret their enthusiasm. Best to give both you and ourselves time to mull over the idea.

During the incubation period requests for car badges and ties got fewer and fewer, but the demand for blazer badges steadily continued. Not only that, but many readers wrote more than once to ask for them and to complain of the time we were taking to make up our mind! Well, it is very definitely made up now, and we are very pleased to announce that an A.C.W. embroidered blazer badge is on the way.

Carried out in red, green and white against a dark blue background, the design, the now familiar globe motif, enclosed by laurel leaves—is particularly attractive, and while colourful is not too thrusting. A strip of film bears the initials A.C.W., which, while easy to recognise, are relatively small—this because although we rejoice in the knowledge that so many of our readers regard us as more of a friendly club than just another magazine, we are sure that they would have no wish to become walking hoardings for A.C.W.! But we also like to think that the initials A.C.W. have over the years come to acquire a quality all of their own. That is to say, for many they are only incidentally the symbol of a magazine; rather are they the badge of that real amateur cine world which the magazine represents.

So we hope you will look on your badge as the insignia of an organisation which links amateur cine enthusiasts the world over—the largest cine organisation in the world which has the magazine for mouthpiece and which supplies all the services that a club member is entitled to expect. The wearer of an A.C.W. badge is not merely an A.C.W. reader: he is primarily a

member of a vast brotherhood of amateur film artists and technicians.

But—there's always a but—caution has its drawbacks, and we are sorry that first supplies of the badge will not be available until the end of August. If we had a sensible f/22 climate we should have said that was too late and would have deferred the introduction of the badge until next year. But since summer has so far failed to put in an appearance, and blazers have been languishing in the wardrobe, we feel that the delay in arrival of our blazer badge need not be lamented; indeed, if the law of averages means anything, its appearance should coincide with the first really warm sun and blue skies of the year!

In the expectation that many cine workers will be wanting one, we have placed a very large order which enables us to supply the badge at a very modest price—only 5s. post free. You can send your order with remittance now, if you like—first come, first served—but please remember that the first consignment is not expected until the end of August. There is an order form below, but if you do not wish to cut your copy of the magazine, an order on a slip of paper will do just as well.

The A.C.W. blazer badge is your idea. We hope you will like the way we have carried it out and that you will take pleasure in wearing it not only for its distinct decorative appeal but as the mark of your active membership of the great and growing community of those who make and show films.

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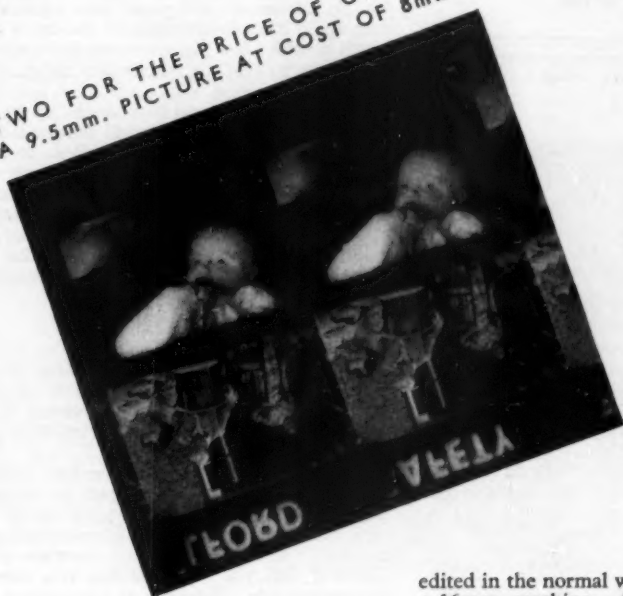
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My First 50ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm.

By
D. M. NEALE

You can get a lot of satisfaction from being the first to think of a new idea, or even from *thinking* you are the first to think of it. If you later find that someone else got there first, you can choose for yourself whether that proves the idea was not so bad (just because others thought of it) or not so good (because the idea did not catch on). So it was with mixed feelings that I read W. F. Richardson's letter in the June issue, for only two days previously I had exposed my first 50ft. of $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm.

"What on earth is $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm.?" you ask. It is my name for a system which enables you to use a 16mm. camera to produce a 9.5mm. picture for about the cost of 8mm. ! According to Mr. Richardson, however, I have been beaten to the post by the Preston and District C.S. whose Chairman, Mr. Atkinson, calls the new gauge 12mm. (Why 12mm. I do not know, unless it is that he regards it as half-way between 8 and 16mm.)

Double-Run 16mm.

In case you did not see Mr. Richardson's letter, here is a brief resume of the process as I envisage it. A standard spool-loading 16mm. camera is used with one side of the gate masked off. The appropriate side of the viewfinder is masked off also and the camera turned on its side to record pictures with a 3:2 format.

When the film has been through the camera once, it is used a second time, as in double-8mm., to expose the other side. Processing is perfectly normal, but the film is subsequently slit to provide two pieces of 8mm. These can be

edited in the normal way and then projected on a 16mm. machine. A small insert is used to steady the film in the gate and two surface silvered mirrors are needed to bring the picture right way up.

The immediate attraction of this unusual arrangement is the economy it offers in running costs. Whereas Kodachrome costs about 18s. per minute in 16mm., or 21s. per minute in 9.5mm., the $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. system works out at only 9s. per minute. A host of loyal 8mm. fans will arise at this point to remind me that in their gauge Kodachrome costs only 7s. per minute—when you can get it ! There are, however, plenty of other points in favour of $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm.

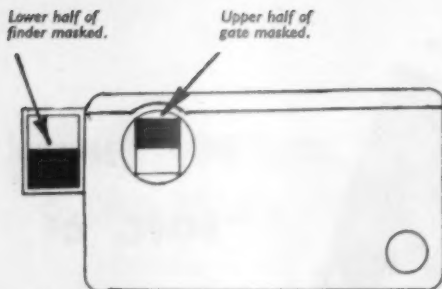
Improved Definition

In 8mm. proper, picture definition is always a problem. Matters are worse with colour, and it is generally recognised that 8mm. fans do well to concentrate on close-ups as far as possible. With $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. you have a picture of twice the area. Consequently definition is appreciably better and landscapes and long shots stand a better chance of coming off.

Moreover, the larger gate area means that the projector can push more light through the film. With reasonably good erecting mirrors, a 16mm. projector should project $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. to about 65 per cent of the screen size of full 16mm. with the same brilliance.

Now that wide screen is all the rage, the 3:2 format can scarcely be considered a disadvantage. But if you don't like it, it is quite a simple matter to mask either the gate or the screen to 4:3, and you lose very little in the process.

In the not so distant future, yet another point may tell in favour of $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. The linear speed



The camera is used on its side, with half the viewfinder and half the gate masked as shown.

of the film is the same as for 16mm. and 9.5mm. Consequently magnetic sound quality should be the same as for these gauges. Even at 24 f.p.s., 8mm. gives poor sound quality and costs 1½d. a foot for striping. But ½-16mm., though giving top quality sound, will cost only ½d. a foot if striped before slitting. Unfortunately a 16mm. magnetic projector would probably need some modification because the claws work on one side of the film and the playback heads on the other. On some machines this might be overcome by using some sort of drunken loop.

Advantage for Clubs

Perhaps the real place for ½-16mm. is in the club. Many clubs use 8mm. for preliminary tests before advancing to 16mm. for more serious work. By using ½-16mm., this duplication of equipment can be avoided. One 16mm. camera and projector can be used for either ½-16mm. or full 16mm., according to current needs.

Subjects of ephemeral interest such as screen tests, newsreels, club publicity films, can all be shot on the low-cost system. But films intended for general circulation, for entry in competitions or for screening before really large audiences (where the maximum screen illumination is required) call for the full 16mm.

Shooting ½-16mm. is perhaps the easiest part of the process. Half the camera gate must be masked off by a piece of black paper secured with adhesive tape. The mask must be on the lens side of the gate aperture or the film will not be in focus. Usually it is a simple

matter to run down the camera spring and then inch the motor to open the shutter. Remove the lens to manoeuvre the paper into position and then apply the adhesive tape on the tip of a gate brush handle. See that the mask is firmly fixed because it will do the mechanism no good if it falls out of position.

When shooting, hold the camera on its side, winding key down. This will ensure that the spools sit securely on their spindles. It means also that the sky areas of a landscape come nearest the perforations, so that the effects of edge-fog, the old enemy of spool-loaders, are substantially reduced. Fogging in the sky areas may not be noticeable, although in the foreground of the picture the same fog would be intolerable.

Camera Masking

This is a particularly acute problem with the Bolex H16 as there is very little clearance between shutter and gate. Nevertheless the job can be done—my own experiments were made on this camera.

Looking at the gate from the lens side, the right-hand side of the gate must be obscured. As a precaution against damaging sound film, even silent projectors have claws omitted on this side. The viewfinder mask must also be half obscured, but you must see that you cover up the correct side. Looking at the camera from the front, it is the left-hand side you must mask off. This is because the camera lens reverses the image in the gate, but not in the viewfinder.

There is another reason for using the camera this way up. Definition tends to fall off towards the corners of a camera gate. With the arrangement described, the poorest definition will occur in the sky areas of the picture, and the best

(Continued on page 396)

When you try experimenting with the wide-screen effect that ½-16mm. gives you, the professional's latest efforts in one of the new ratios may provide further inspiration. The Movietone News technicians who worked on *Flight of the White Heron*, the CinemaScope film of the *Royal Tour*, recently demonstrated the equipment used at Leavers-Rich Studio, where the 8½ miles of tape recorded on the tour were transcribed on to film. Left to right: Pat Sunderland of Movietone News; Reg. Sutton, recordist, with his Leavers-Rich recorder; cameraman Paul Wyand with his Mitchell camera fitted with anamorphic lens; and Norman Leavers, B.Sc., A.C.C.I., F.B.K.S.



Souvenir

All of us who produce A.C.W. make films as well as write about them—and we don't always use the most elaborate equipment. The Editor, for example, can rarely be parted from a faithful but extremely ancient camera. And as for film stock, well, we are (very properly) modest with it. Here Derek Hill describes the production of his latest 100ft. picture.



How lonely can a lone worker get? For this shot in *Souvenir* the one-man unit was actor as well. Procedure: switch on the camera, dash in front, perform, dash back and switch off—and don't forget to cut out the rather startling few frames at beginning and end of the shot in editing.

When Amabile announced that she was going home to Italy in just over three weeks, I found myself in the familiar situation of wanting to produce a film in an absurdly short time. As she could only spare a few hours each week-end, I would have to start shooting almost at once. I had two evenings in which to prepare a script.

The theme was a problem. I wanted some excuse for plenty of big close-ups of Amabile. Time and money limited the length to about 100ft. of 16mm. monochrome. I had no other actors, though I could nip in front of the camera myself, thanks to the automatic running lock on the Siemens. Could I make some kind of filmic souvenir which would recall Amabile's two-year stay in London to both of us? Four minutes isn't long, but the idea seemed worth trying.

Economic Approach

I listed the items which ought to be included. Her arrival, initial bewilderment, eventual acceptance of the British mode of life, the decision to stay, the search for employment, work in a hospital, a brief holiday in Edinburgh, and finally her departure—these should all have a place. A straightforward step-by-step treatment would obviously never cover the ground in time. Moreover, a large proportion of shots were to be C.U.s and M.S.s of Amabile; an unusual approach was needed, something at once economical and telling.

Though the film would be an essentially personal one, I wanted it to be so complete in itself that it would be self-explanatory to anyone who didn't know Amabile. I decided to begin

by showing as quickly as possible her nationality, her love of travel, and her arrival in England. A C.U. of her leg kicking idly at the ground as she sat on a suitcase would follow smoothly after a shot of a cut-out map of Italy, for there was an immediate visual link in the pattern and shape of the two images.

Several other isolated ideas occurred to me, but it was still difficult to achieve any kind of overall flow working within these limitations. For instance, Amabile would doubtless like a few shots of well-known London scenes in the film. (It was to be a two-way souvenir, and we would have one copy each.) I thought of the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace.

Picture postcard stuff? Of course; that was how I would introduce these shots. I would show a brief glimpse of each building from the postcard photographer's viewpoint, followed by three cards of the same scenes on Amabile's lap as she writes home. Should any cineaste ever see the film, this last shot would prove an unexpected forestalling of the obvious criticism! But how was this sequence to dovetail into the rest of the film?

Sound Links

Glancing through my notes, I decided that the film needed sound. A few lines of commentary, appropriate snatches of music and one or two effects would tie the whole thing together. And A.C.W.'s tape recorder was available. I set to work on the detailed script full of enthusiasm.

At this stage I didn't bother about the actual

wording of the commentary. I intended using only a few words here and there where it was impossible to express what I wanted by economic visual methods. For example, I could use a pictorial link to bridge the gap between the "initial bewilderment" and "British way of life" sequences, as follows: (1) M.S. of traffic tearing across a zebra crossing; (2) C.U. of Amabile looking from right to left, left to right, apparently waiting to cross; (3) L.S. of a vigorous tennis match in progress.

But words would be needed to get over the real purpose of the third shot. This "British way of life" theme would have to be light-hearted if it was not to be pompous. Here was a chance to introduce the three postcard shots. Each showed a very British institution; if they followed the tennis match, the suggestion that these four made up essentially British contributions to civilised conduct would keep things on the right plane.

Double Meaning

So I wrote the script for the visuals shot by shot, knowing the outline of what I intended saying in the commentary and exactly where it would be used. (In this particular sequence the final words were, "She soon came to understand the British way of life" against the second shot, hinting at a lifetime spent waiting to cross zebras. Big Ben's chimes are heard against the tennis match, which gives a second meaning to the commentator's words.)

Unfortunately time was so short that the first shooting session arrived before I had completed the script—a deplorable situation! However, I had sufficient material planned to take 50ft., mainly C.U.s and M.S.s of Amabile. One shot entailed linking two locations to make them look like one. In showing Amabile's first arrival in London, I wanted to whip pan from the sign of Victoria station to a C.U. of Amabile's bewildered face. (All right, Centre Sprocket, I know you don't like whip pans, but a cut, fade, dissolve

or normal pan would not have been nearly as effective in this instance.) Apart from the difficulties which would have been involved in setting up correctly and making a neat swish in such a congested locality, hospital hours prevented Amabile from tramping from location to location in her off-duty moments.

Successful "Cheat"

I took two separate shots, one whipping away from the station sign, the other whipping from a brick wall on to Amabile. I ensured that the direction of the two camera movements was similar, and that the blurred frames of both shots would roughly match so far as broad light and dark areas were concerned. When I cut the two "blurs" together, I was astonished at the success of the scheme.

I strongly recommend a sparing use of this method to link people with difficult locations. It's rather tricky swinging the camera quickly and stopping in exactly the right position, so try a few practice swings. I took the shot twice, once ending on a full-face C.U. of Amabile and once on a profile C.U.

When Kodak returned that first 50ft. (posted to them mid-day Monday, received back Wednesday morning) I congratulated myself on the precaution with pardonable smugness. The full-face view was sliced off at the forehead, but the profile fitted the frame quite neatly.

Gay Conclusion

During the following week I scripted the rest of the film. The ending was the biggest snag. Anything that concluded with a farewell scene seemed bound to leave a melancholy impression, but I wanted the film to remain light-hearted throughout. Eventually the celebration of the Queen's return home suggested an idea, and I planned the final sequence as follows:

Over a close shot of Amabile kneeling on a bulging suitcase, the commentator says, "And now she's going home." Immediately there is a



INTERIOR—TAKEN
OUT OF DOORS.

When you're racing against time to complete a film, lighting problems can waste valuable minutes. So if that old faithful among shots, "hand switches off alarm clock," can be filmed out of doors, so much the better. The producer of *Souvenir* didn't want to descend five floors to ground level to fake his "bedroom interior," so with the aid of a clock, magazine and handkerchief, and a slight rearrangement of the curtains he improvised a bedside table on his balcony. What the eye doesn't see . . .



Getting from one scene to another in the shortest time is often a problem in short films. A cut from a big close-up to another showing similar action is a useful device. In making *Souvenir* Derek Hill cut from a B.C.U. of the girl's hands doing up a button on her dress to a B.C.U. of her pinning up the apron of her uniform (top). Then (bottom) back for a medium shot showing the girl in her newly-established costume and setting.

wail of mournful music against shots of rain, puddles, and derelict buildings. Amabile walks away from the camera in long shot as the music fades out.

With sudden buoyancy the commentator says, "But she did say she might come back!" There is a swift cut to shot after shot of waving flags; happy, triumphant music crashes out. Then back to the L.S. of Amabile, who puts down her case, turns and waves directly at the camera. Cut to a C.U. of her waving. The End. (It's usually unforgiveable to have people waving at the camera, of course, but in this case it seemed not merely excusable but exactly right for the closing shots.)

Novel Titles

I estimated that I might be able to finish shooting during the next week-end. I had bought 150ft. of Super X, allowing a third for wastage and trimming. I did manage to get through the remaining 100ft., but not, unfortunately, through the whole script. The opening and closing titles took the form of luggage labels stuck on Amabile's suitcase, and the up-and-down left-to-right movement needed to take in the labels used more footage than I had anticipated. I ran out half-way through the shot.

I bought another 50ft., feeling that it was probably just as well that I now had plenty to spare for retakes. This time the "rushes" didn't rush at quite the same speed, and another week-end had passed before they were returned. I used the last of the new film on shots which I had felt a little uncertain about in shooting, praying that I had chosen the right ones. I now had five days in which to edit what had been returned, wait for the rest, edit that, record commentary, music and effects, and finally show the result to the "star" before she left.

Cut and Shuffle

Things began well enough. 50ft. arrived without a dud shot in it. I started cutting, first putting the shots in order, then trimming, and here and there juggling a little for effect. One sequence, for instance, showing Amabile's first impression of London, was to be made up of shots of buses hurtling past at all angles at 8 f.p.s. At least, that's what my script said. In actual fact, I'd finished up with three shots. One showed a group of stationary buses from the back. Another showed a bus crawling slowly up Kingsway (I'd forgotten to change speed). The third, the only one that seemed to hold any promise at all, showed two buses at a steep angle tearing past the camera.

Projected one after the other, the shots looked hopeless. I tried cutting each in half and alternating the three. That looked a little better. Then I spent a feverish half-hour snipping the shots into lengths of six frames, four frames, two frames, shuffling them more or less haphazardly, and joining them into something like a cross between a patchwork quilt and crazy



THIS IS THE SECOND IN A SERIES of letters to a beginner in cine work. The emphasis throughout is on "how"—how to do it and how it works. Once the "know-how" of equipment has been mastered, the owner can go ahead with confidence, but until then he must tread carefully. Here, then, is a guide to the cine camera. The author explains its mechanism, and advises on the best method of choosing a second-hand one.

Fig. 1. The Kodak BB Junior, a 16mm. spool-loading camera.

A—the lens, with built-in lens hood ;
B—the lens mount ;
C—the lens aperture indicator ;
D—the exposure button ;
E—the winding key ;
F—the viewfinder.

Letter to Christopher

By H. A. POSTLETHWAITE

My dear Christopher,

So you have decided to get a cine camera, and you ask what goes on inside it, and how you should set about vetting a second-hand camera. Here are some photographs of a popular 16mm. spool-loading camera—a Kodak BB Junior—which will give you a good idea of the mechanism. I haven't seen any new cameras of this type since the war, but there are plenty of second-hand specimens.

Fig. 1 shows all the external controls. The lens, A, has a built-in lens hood, which is a good feature. Focusing is done by rotating the lens mount, B; the figure for 25 feet is engraved in red to indicate that if the camera is set for this distance, everything will normally be sharp from 8 feet onwards.

Focus and Exposure

Many cameras have a fixed focus lens, particularly 8mm. cameras. This means that the lens has been permanently set at a focus which makes everything sharp from about 6 feet on. It cuts out the trouble of focusing, but such lenses are not quite as fast as focusing lenses, and for close-ups a portrait attachment is necessary.

The pointer, C, indicates the lens aperture, or "stop", and here I had better explain what a stop is, and the meaning of the symbol "f". The amount of light passing through the lens is regulated by an affair of thin metal leaves between the front and rear glasses of the lens. This is called an iris diaphragm, because it works something like the iris of an eye.

As the pointer C is moved, the aperture in the

diaphragm is made larger or smaller; the bigger the aperture, the more light reaches the film, and the brighter the picture. But too much light will give a faint, washy picture.

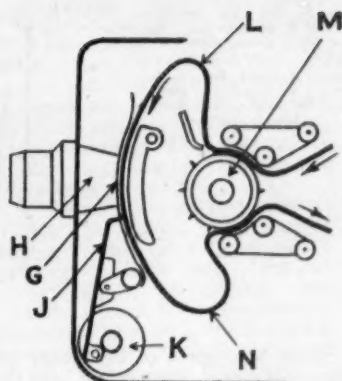
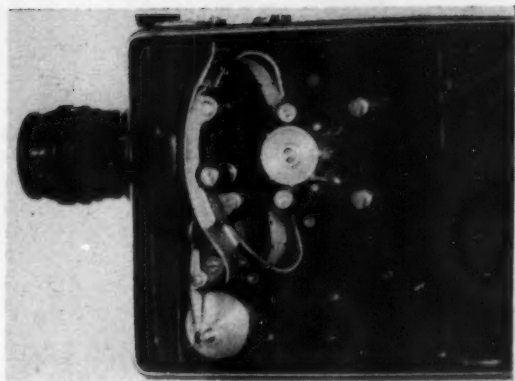
The size of the opening, or stop, is distinguished by an "f" number, and the "f" value of any aperture (skip this paragraph if you like) is obtained by dividing the diameter of the aperture into the focal length of the lens, which is the distance between the lens and the film. If the diameter of the lens is one inch, and the focal length four inches, the aperture is $f/4$; similarly, when the focal length is one inch (as in the BB camera) an aperture of a quarter of an inch is still $f/4$. In both cases the value of the light reaching the film will be the same.

When the f number is low (e.g., $f/2.8$) the aperture is fairly well open; so $f/2.8$ is termed a big stop, and conversely $f/16$ is a small stop. We "stop down" to $f/16$ if the day is so bright that we have to restrict the amount of light reaching the film. We "open up" when the light is poor.

THIS MONTH'S HINT

Try some shots through the windscreen of the car, but have the windscreen clean and the camera close to it. Rest the camera on something firm if possible, but don't be afraid of shooting "freehand".

If you shoot from a moving train, have the window open. Hold the camera in the hand, and counteract the swaying of the train as much as you can.



Figs. 2 and 3. Inside the Kodak BB Junior. G—the gate; H—the shutter position; J—the claw; K—the rotating disc governing the claw movement; L—the upper loop; M—the sprocket wheel; N—the lower loop.

"F" numbers run in series, such as: $f/2$, $f/2.8$, $f/4$, $f/5.6$, $f/8$, $f/11$, etc.; or alternatively: $f/2.5$, $f/3.5$, $f/5$, $f/7$, $f/10$, etc. Each stop passes half the light passed by the preceding stop in the same series. So $f/8$ passes half the light of $f/5.6$ and one-quarter the light of $f/4$. In common parlance, $f/8$ is one stop slower than $f/5.6$, and two stops slower than $f/4$.

The exposure button, D, is held down while pictures are being taken. If it is pressed hard down, it will stay down until it is pushed up again. This permits the cameraman to walk into the picture if he wants to. E is the key for winding up the motor; when the spring is fully wound the camera will run for about 30 seconds before it needs rewinding. But it is a good plan to rewind after each shot.

Checking Footage

F is the viewfinder. On the front lens of this two lines are engraved marked "6ft." and "2ft." When pictures are being taken nearer than 6ft. the top of the subject must be kept below the appropriate line, because the camera lens is a couple of inches lower than the viewfinder and "sees" a lower image.

On the top of the camera a footage scale shows how much of the 50ft. spool of film remains unexposed. It is actuated by a feeler which responds to the varying thickness of the spool of film in the camera, and it is usually not

very precise. This does not matter once you get to know your camera, and remember that when the indicator says, for example, that there are 5ft. left, there are really 10ft. ! On some cameras the film counter is geared to the mechanism and records the footage that has been exposed, or even the number of frames.

Now to look inside the camera (Figs. 2 and 3). As you know, each frame of the film is exposed for $1/32$ second, and then the light from the lens is cut off for $1/32$ second while that frame is replaced in the "gate", G, of the camera by the next frame. The shutter, which is hidden away in the place marked H in Fig. 3, is a rotating disc of which half has been cut away (Fig. 4).

The film is moved on by a claw, J, which is actuated by the rotating disc, K, in such a way that the claw pulls down the film (Fig. 5, 1 and 2), is withdrawn (3), is pushed upwards ready for its next grab (4 and 5), and is pushed forward into the next pair of sprocket holes on the film (6).

Film Path

To protect the film from damage by this snatching and grabbing, it is formed into a loop, L, before it comes to the gate. A sprocket wheel, M, passes the film forward from the supply spool at precisely the speed at which it will go through the gate, and the same sprocket wheel takes up the film after exposure, via another loop, N, and passes it on to the take-up spool, O.

To load the camera, the film from the supply spool is threaded so that it follows the course ready drawn in the camera (see Fig. 2)—the emulsion side (white) being nearest to the lens—and is attached to the take-up spool. The mechanism is run for a second or two with the camera open, to see that the loops are correctly maintained; then the lid is put on the camera, and it is run again for 8 seconds to use up the "leader".

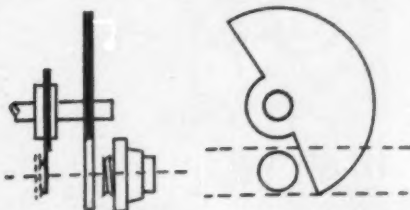
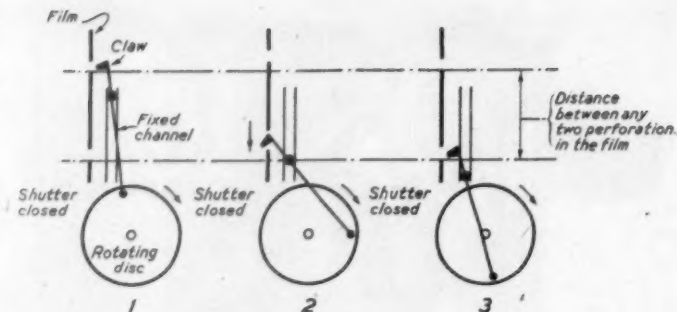


Fig. 4. The shutter, which rotates between the lens and the gate.

Fig. 5. The claw movement. 1 and 2, the claw pulls down the film; 3—the claw is withdrawn; 4 and 5—it is pushed upwards ready for its next grab; 6—it is pushed forward into the next pair of sprocket holes on the film.



Each 50ft. spool of film really contains 58 (or more) feet. The first 5ft. and the last 3ft., termed "leader" and "trailer", are provided to protect the rest during daylight loading and unloading. They are cut off by the processing station, so any exposures that might be made on them would be lost. But as the leader and trailer can give only limited protection, the camera must always be loaded and unloaded with care, in subdued light, preferably indoors.

That explains the mechanism of this 16mm. camera, and though other models vary in detail, the general principle is the same. In an 8mm. or 9.5mm. camera you may not find a sprocket wheel, loops being provided by some other device; or there may not even be any loops with the narrower and shorter 8mm. film. In magazine cameras the mechanism of film transport is largely or wholly incorporated in the magazine.

Simple Maintenance

The clockwork machinery of the camera is sealed by the makers and should not be meddled with. The gate can be taken apart (or opened) for cleaning, but there is little else to be done by way of maintenance except to keep the camera absolutely free from dust.

Now, knowing how a camera works, we can consider what faults there might be in a second-hand camera, and how to look for them. Always arrange to have the camera on trial, or with a money-back guarantee and, if you possibly can, consult someone who knows about cine cameras. Consider whether the camera is satisfactory as regards bulk and weight, see that there are no traces of rust, and if you are buying privately and it is a foreign-made camera, satisfy yourself that Customs duty has been paid. See that the catch on the door of the camera holds it shut securely. If it is magazine loading, be sure it takes standard magazines.

Wind the camera fully, preferably with a length of waste film in it, and see that it runs sweetly, without bumps or judders, and without slowing down, for something like half a minute,

and that the loops of the film are maintained—i.e., that neither loop gets bigger or smaller. See that there are no scratches on the film after it has been run through.

Examine the lens, removing it from the camera if possible, to see that there are no serious scratches and not much dust between the components, and that there is no indication that cemented components are separating. Tiny bubbles in the glass are unimportant.

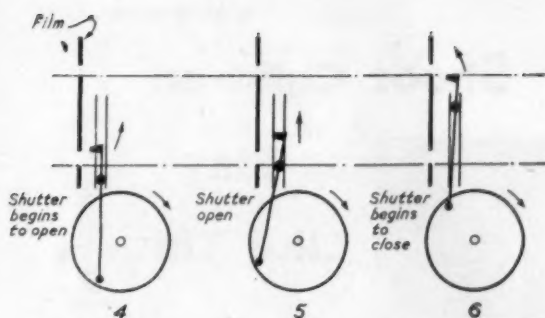
Camera Tests

Make a mark on the length of waste film at the top of the upper loop, or just before it enters the gate, run the camera for exactly 10 seconds, and measure the film that has passed through the gate. It should be four feet if the camera is making 16 exposures per second. (2ft. with 8mm.)

If the camera passes these tests, expose a full length of film in a series of shots, using a really rigid tripod or other firm support for the camera. Some of the shots should be on fairly near subjects, some on subjects at about 12ft., and others at greater distances. Some should be in poor light (e.g., in the shade) so that a big aperture is used, but care should also be taken to expose freely all sides of the camera itself to sunshine, so that if there is a light leak the film will show it. Keep a careful record of the aperture and the measured distance to the subject for each shot.



Fig. 6. The claw mechanism. The claw is at the end of its downward pull—position 2 in Fig. 5. The spring near the claw is to hold it back while film is being loaded into the camera.



When the film is returned from processing, project it and check that (1) all shots are in sharp focus; (2) all are steady, i.e., they do not float up and down, or from side to side; (3) there is no fluctuation in the density of the picture within the same scene; and (4) there is

no fogging. Fogging might result in a white haze over a few frames, or occasional flashes of white on the screen.

If you have enlisted a friend to superintend your first shooting efforts, ask him to view the projected result. He may be able to see things that you would not notice.

I'll give you some tips on handling the camera in a further letter. But don't be afraid of using it right away. Practise with an empty camera; and then, with film in the camera, at varying distances. Be critical of the results, and listen patiently to the criticisms of friends and relatives. You'll learn a lot that way.

Next month's "Letter to Christopher" deals with tripods—and how to make do without them. It also describes how the simplest of incidents can be made interesting by intelligent shooting.

I Didn't Mean to Cut Off Her Head

Yes, we've all said this at one time or another. But here's a simple way of avoiding those scalped and beheaded subjects—and it only needs a sheet of cardboard.

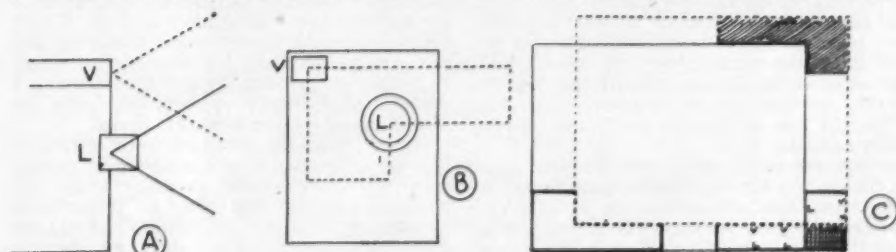
The view seen by the viewfinder is different from that seen by the lens (see A). However, the displacement is the same for all distances and, even when there is as much as three inches between centres it does not matter when taking longer shots. For close-ups, however, the difference is very important. Make an L-shaped card as indicated by the dotted lines at B, the outer corner being over the centre of the viewfinder and the inner corner over the centre of the lens. Make the horizontal arm longer than the vertical to indicate which way round it must be held.

The card is used against the subject of the close-up as at C, the dotted line indicating the limits of the picture as seen through the viewfinder. As the view seen is too high and too much to the right, bring the card into the scene so that its outer corner fits into the top right corner of the picture seen in the finder. The inner lines of the card now show the outer limit of the picture which the camera will take. This is usually sufficient guide for placing the whole picture.

The card can, however, be used in the opposite corner by turning it over so that the

inner angle can just be seen in the finder, when the outer edges are the limits on the set of the picture being taken. We have never had occasion to use the card for the other corners; but this could be done as shown in the bottom right corner. Draw a black rectangle on the card and indicate the edges of the viewfinder picture with the letters V and the edges limiting the lens-picture with the letters L, using the card as shown.

But the first position of the card is the important one and with very little practice the distance can be memorised, so that quite big close-ups are possible with reasonable accuracy. Where the viewfinder is beside the camera lens, then the card merely consists of a strip of a width equal to the distance between centres. Where the viewfinder is to the left of the camera lens the view seen is, of course, that distance to the left of the view taken by the camera. The same principle can be applied to those viewfinders which see less than the camera which manufacturers sometimes fit on the assumption that none of their customers can shoot straight! The only difference is that the camera will continue to photograph more than you expect.



Shoot Children

at Play Like This...



If the sun is directly behind the camera, it gives a flat picture from an eye-level camera position and an even flatter one from a high angle.

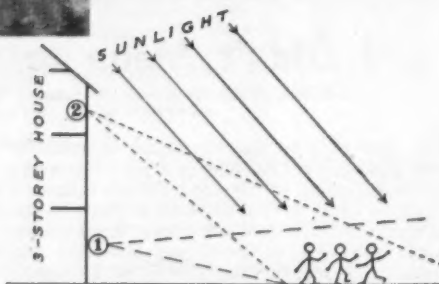
In order to obtain the best effect with a subject which contains a pattern of movement in one plane, the camera should look down on to that plane. Or, to put it more simply, it is well worth while using an elevated camera position for such shots as gymnastic displays, parades and processions, columns on the march, and so on.

One sees numerous examples on the professional screen. In musicals alone, I don't know what they'd do without their camera-crane. And although rude things have been said about some of the over-exuberant camera manipulations, the fact remains that fine pictorial dance-patterns have been screened with the camera looking down almost vertically—or, the ultra exotic, looking upwards while the dancers perform on a glass floor.

One Precaution

Two further advantages of the high-angle camera set-up are that it usually lends depth to the shot by throwing emphasis on to the dimension from camera to background, and that it makes a welcome change from the all-pervading head-high camera position. I think there is only one essential precaution in shooting these high-angle shots, and it is rather a subtle one. In common eye-level shots, taken as so many are in the summertime and within a few hours of noon, the sun is comparatively high in the sky, and although we commonly regard it as "behind" us or "to one side", this is not strictly accurate.

In fact, the sun is often mainly a top light, and though this has the disadvantage of casting rather harsh shadows unless care is taken, it does give the great advantage of adding depth to such shots. Now, if you shoot a high-angle



shot with the sun "behind" you, it may really be shining almost along the camera lens axis, as illustrated in the diagram. In this case it will be giving no assistance at all in the matter of depth, and so the shot will look disappointingly flat. The remedy is clear and simple: for these high-angle shots, monochrome or colour, be sure that the sun is well to one side. Risky with colour, but excellent with monochrome, the sun may be right behind the subject, throwing intriguing shadows towards the camera. There is no risk of it striking the lens due to the high angle of the camera.

Sure-Fire Effect

So much for the stock subjects and the technique. One very satisfactory application, is the shot of a group of children at play. If they are playing some definite game, it may be well to shoot an establishing shot at normal speed. But whatever they are doing, I have found it a sure-fire effect to film at about one frame per second, using the single-picture device.

Don't forget the three technical essentials that go with this: use a rock-steady camera support; allow for the generally longer exposure most cameras give in single-frame shooting, by closing down between half and one stop; and remember to shoot an absolute



minimum of 100 frames, as any shot lasting less than 100 frames (6 seconds) on this subject is disappointingly short.

Simply by shooting at one frame per second you will secure a memorable shot but, as always, there is scope for finesse. For example, if a car approaches it will pass through the picture area in between one and two seconds and will therefore register on only two or three frames, thus becoming a meaningless blur. Matters are improved by stepping-up the frame-release rate to three or four per second temporarily. Such stepping-up should be as gradual as circumstances allow, because an instantaneous change of filming speed gives the screen appearance of a continuity break.

Again, if for some reason the children reach an impasse and all stand still to argue (argument seldom lasts long without some action arising) you can drop the shooting rate to a frame every two or more seconds until choice action is resumed. It may also be advisable to have some adult ready to stroll into the picture in case of crisis, such as the whole mob of children suddenly darting right out of the picture area.

It is very effective, and not too difficult, to incorporate a panning effect in these animation shots. The tripod must have a good pan head, and in between each frame released you must rotate the camera a trifle. This is helped by extending the pan head operating arm. As a guide, with an arm ten inches long, the pan will appear smooth if the rotation per frame is not more than one sixteenth

of an inch measured at the end of the arm. Useful props in these animation shots are skipping ropes and tricycles. A large dog also helps. If someone shouts "Tea!" and all dash off in unison, an effective ending is furnished.

COMPARISONS AREN'T ODIUS

Around the middle of the high-season of outdoor filming, many cameramen seem to be afflicted by worries as to whether they are achieving the best possible quality with their apparatus. Is the film steady? Is focus as crisp as it should be? Is the projected picture sharp all over? They know enough to be aware that the answer to such questions is never a simple *yes* or *no*, but they remain uneasy. This uneasiness is sometimes increased by such incidents as their exposure meter disagreeing with that of a friend or acquaintance whose work they consider better than their own.

I think it is worth restating three factors that, in their different ways, have considerable bearing on this problem. First, the only way to get the necessary comparisons is to see other



Bristol A.C.S., too, have discovered that youngsters are 'cinematic'. Call Yourself Scouts! their latest production, is being shot on the banks of the Somerset Avon. Above: the cameraman is propped in a precarious position to take a C.U. of the Scout's feet as he stumbles on the crumbling wall. An assistant presses the cable release. Left: the assistant cameraman takes a highlight reading, while the writer/director (bottom left) looks on.



people's results on similar apparatus. This can be done in a number of ways: by joining a cine club; by striking up an acquaintanceship; by asking your dealer to arrange something, either by borrowing a film made by the makers of the apparatus in question, or by showing a film made by another customer.

It is important that all relevant factors should really be similar. For example, some time ago there was an outbreak of badly-perforated double-run 8mm. film, which resulted in vertical unsteadiness of the projected picture if the claw-to-gate separation on camera and projector differed. Clearly it would be no use comparing this film on two different projectors with different claw-to-gate separations, nor would it be valid to put it down to being a camera fault simply because another roll of film, of different make, gave no such unsteadiness on another camera.

Editing Advantages

Secondly, it is highly important to remain objective in comparing results. Some cinematographers get a focus-phobia, and are always on the look-out for any blurring effect, seeing or imagining they see things that no audience would ever notice. This applies to splices, too. I wish it applied more to the subject-matter of some films!

Thirdly, cinematographers who do not edit their films are at a tremendous disadvantage on the quality aspect. They leave in shots that are below par and ought to go. They leave in false starts to shots, often with grossly disfigured frames, and they leave in over-runs at shot ends, again often including jerks and other photographic horrors encountered in day-to-day filming. (The cameraman tends to relax his care in stopping the camera after he instinctively knows that the relevant part of the shot has been safely canned.)

Most important of all, these odd frames, retained here and there, and redundant to the film's message, have no narrative value. They



"Typical filming weather" was how members of Rookery Farm F.U. described the downpour in which they shot a London procession recently. Left: they kept the camera dry simply by keeping it under their hat—or rather the assistant cameraman's sou'wester.

Above: the tripod was abandoned for several shots which needed a variety of angles with the least possible delay.

bore the audience who are occupied solely in seeking some content in them—and who find nothing but debased photographic quality.

ALL OF A JUMBLE

Not so long ago I got involved in a jumble sale. It was to raise funds, of course, and this time it was to help the repayment to members of a film society of money borrowed from them to purchase a new 16mm. sound projector. The procedure was comparatively simple—an announcement at a film-show meeting, general agreement with the idea, appointment of an all-female jumble committee, requests for jumble, certain carting operations by car-owners, and finally, the night itself!

Trestle-tables loaded with all-sorts in the local Ambulance Hall, hired for the occasion; chalked-up prices; willing helpers behind each stall. The doors almost burst open at 6 o'clock, there was hectic collection of the entrance money (3d.), and then a mad melee of buying, bargaining, and persuasion. All was over in less than an hour, and the net profit was £14. The Hon. Treasurer, who rightly felt it a duty to be present, remarked that it was a highly filmic affair, and it is for this reason, rather than the sordid financial aspect, that I venture to recommend the routine to cine clubs.

MOVIE MAKING FOR EVERYONE

There will be a warm welcome for the new revised edition, now available, of R. H. Alder's *Movie Making for Everyone*. The constant use made of the first edition suggested that a strong cloth cover, rather than paper, was desirable. The book covers all aspects of amateur cinematography, from the cine camera and its accessories, films and filters, exposure and lighting to scriptwriting, continuity, editing, titling and projection. Whether dealing with trick effects or programme routine, camera manipulation or the cost of filming, it is clearly and concisely expressed, with a special appeal for the beginner who wants to concentrate on family films. *Movies Making for Everyone* is published by Fountain Press at 9s. 6d.

Criticism? They Can't Take It!

By DENYS DAVIS

1st May. May Day used to be our traditional day for riots. I don't think we are to be disappointed this year. There's a first class row brewing up in the background of the amateur cine movement, sparked by an enthusiastic group of film makers. They don't like criticism of amateur films in general and their own films in particular. I have little patience with those who are impatient of fair comment. For, let's face it, amateur films are *not* what they might be.

I have frequently sent my films to the national competitions. Some have had a very rough reception indeed, but that was all part of the fun. From the published criticisms I have learnt much—and disagreed with much. It is, as we all know, impossible to please everybody so that, since movie-making is a hobby with us, it is perhaps better just to try to please oneself. But that should not mean that valid criticism cannot be published.

We seem to be in danger of running the amateur film movement like a village garden fete. Polite platitudes are the order of the day and every film has to be lauded to the skies. Take the case of stories for amateur films. There is much creative talent in this hobby but little in the script writing department.

My own films are a case in point. Technically they are average, or, possibly a little above. But the stories! Hackneyed if you wish, trite if you

like. To me they are stepping stones to better films—films that I hope to make one day. Meanwhile, many readers have taken a hefty swipe at my efforts and I would like to *thank them for taking the trouble to do so*.

Unfortunately, not all amateurs share this view. Even mild criticism is considered an unpardonable error; their filmic efforts must be considered above and beyond comment. Some years ago I delivered a spanking in these pages to one of our better amateur cine societies which had put on a thoroughly disgraceful public presentation of amateur films. It provoked many letters, many for and some against. But what I shall always remember was that three individual members of that club wrote to me in support of those remarks. One of those members was their Hon. Secretary.

I still believe that my criticisms were justified. Certainly, the overall standard of the club's film shows improved afterwards. Was that coincidence? Perhaps, perhaps not. Maybe the time has now come to discuss amateur film making rather more objectively. It may pain and grieve a few, yet in the long run, I believe it will do more good than harm, if only because we may yet see better amateur films.

4th May. This diary does not shie away from controversy. So I am a little dazed by the reception that was accorded an earlier entry.

Small Heath and District Photographic Society's Cine-Eight Section will probably welcome criticism of *The Man She Left Behind*, for it represents the first effort of this new club. The local press showed considerable interest in the group's activities, and reported the first shooting session in some detail.



All the letters supported my contention that the Ensign Kinecam was, and is, a fine camera. You will remember that I suggested that an enterprising manufacturer should make this modestly priced camera for the home market. Several are nibbling!

Tool Mystery

Meanwhile, from a dozen sources, we can piece together the story of this camera which, even today, is still used in at least one American TV station to film newsreels. Owners praise it highly and several categorically state they "have never had it jam". Still no positive information is offered as to the whereabouts of the original jigs, etc. The Ensign factory was bombed during the war and Fred Butcher, who was in charge of the cinematograph section, has died. It is clear that a cheap, reliable cine camera for 16mm. film would sell in quantity. It is equally clear that the Ensign Kinecam is a basic design that has proved itself by the test of time.

Only one reader states that he has had "several spots of bother with my camera". He adds, "If anyone seriously contemplates making it again, I would be glad to pass on what information I have". Another has used his Kinecam semi-professionally for the last two years and suggests: that the parallax compensating viewfinder should be made for a 15mm. lens and accept tinted perspex masks for other focus lenses; that a simple friction rewind knob for the feed spool would allow rewinding without opening the lid until the spring is fully wound (he has had this modification made by Kaypro Instruments Ltd., of Sheffield); that a frame counter would be a god-send; and that a much larger camera foot would make steady tripod and titling work easy without elaborate fixtures.

Golden Opportunity

However, these are refinements for the advanced worker. Most of us can make do without them. Practically all the Fourfold films have been shot on Kinecams and there are many other clubs that do the same. Of all the letters received, not one suggests a turret head—and that surprises me. (Not that I use a turret but it is one refinement that I should like to be able to afford.)

So there you are, manufacturers! You are, I have heard it said, a timid, unimaginative lot. You like to play safe, so here's your chance. You can pick an old Kinecam to pieces and make a safe piece of equipment that will sell. Call it the "16mm. Diarist"! Off to the drawing boards and get cracking!

7th May. Mr. Eley, who made *Little Cinders*, showed me an extremely useful gadget some time ago which I have now copied. He was anxious to film in the Royal Parks wherein the use of tripods is restricted. So he made himself an ordinary telescopic unipod, but found that this did not give him completely steady pictures. When he analysed his results on the screen, he

found that the unwanted movement was mostly horizontal, or, if you prefer it, panning.

So he attached a hinged bar to the foot of his unipod so that, when opened, it would extend at right angles to the main support to the left of his camera. Now, when he is filming, he presses down on this bar with his left foot so that the camera is held rock steady and cannot pan either to the left or right. This is a good gadget—and not only because it is making officialdom pause and scratch its head!

10th May. In and out of a crowd quickly and you will get fresh, uninhibited close-ups. But focus is the problem and it takes time. So here's a tip for the fellow who likes to work fast and bring home the results. Buy an optical rangefinder and fix it on to your camera just above or to one side of the viewfinder. Before



With the wealth of information provided above, there seems little for us to add—except that Canterbury F.U. will undoubtedly find their use of the clapper board invaluable when it comes to editing *Make Your Own Movies*.

you go in to take the shot, set both the rangefinder and your lens to an appropriate setting. As you close with your chosen subject, look through the rangefinder and move in until the two images coincide.

Your camera will now be in sharp, pinpoint focus, so you can start filming at this instant. Slip your eye down, while filming, to the camera viewfinder and correct your line-up and framing. Do this while still filming and you will find that the shot is yours before your presence is noticed.

14th May. The premiere of *A.C.W.'s Ten Best*. I really must congratulate the Continental amateurs on their taste, skill and technique.

17th May. A tip for still photographers might seem out of place in these pages were it not that so few of our clubs can boast of photographs suitable for publicity purposes. During a session this evening posing stills for a film article in a weekly magazine I used a trick that is well-known to professionals. I usually have with me a bit of chalk for marking the edges of

Kingsway F.U.'s current experimental production, *Inner Circle*, is described as "a study of a woman who, by reason of her self-centred nature, wanders tormented in a world of her own making, in which her subjective experience assumes an objective reality. Allegorical in treatment, the film also implies criticism of an urban civilisation—the background against which the film is photographed—and all sympathy for the woman is not lost." Here the director gives her instructions for a shot. The Bell & Howell Filmo with 1in. f/2.8 Hektor lens stands in the foreground. Below: the shot as it appears on the screen.



dark objects so that they will register when—and if—blocks are made from our photos. It saves such a lot of retouching afterwards. If you look back to page 175 of the June issue you will see the idea in operation. The tape recorder on the floor had been outlined in this manner. Did you, I wonder, notice it when you first looked at that page?

20th May. I have just sold an old, pre-war American radio set that was given to me for a Christmas present about 1934. It had quite a novel arrangement for its loudspeaker was set in the wooden cabinet so that it pointed up to the ceiling. When the radio was playing the music or speech seemed to fill the room and it was quite difficult to trace the source—which in these days of stereophonic sound (marvel of) would seem to be an advantage.

Having sold the radio, it somewhat belatedly occurred to me that the same principle might work rather well in my little studio cinema. My sound projector is rather old and noisy, which makes the showing of sound films in so small a space rather trying for, while the front row gets the sound track full blast, other members of the audience have to sort out projector roar from sound track hiss.

I have just experimented with the speaker lying flat on its back pointing up to the ceiling.



Perhaps it is the novelty, perhaps the delight of discovery, but whatever it is, I liked the result. So now I invite you to experience the thrill of DAVIS FLOORPHONIC SOUND!

21st May. Little-things-one-just-doesn't-do Department: play a record of "Star Spangled Banner" for a Trooping the Colour film.

23rd May. A pal of mine recently moved into the country and is busily engaged in knocking two cottages into one village manor. The first, and to his way of thinking, most important job, was to convert one of the downstairs "usual offices" into a projection box with automatically operated curtains. Being a handy sort of a chap, he has packed his projector, twin turntables, tape recorder, dimmer lighting and monitor speaker all into this restricted space.

He held his first show recently and told me about it this evening. He used his living room window, which opens on to the village High Street, for a proscenium, with the ordinary room curtains motorised from the projection box. His first film was his own record of the Coronation which he ran for a few friends whom he had invited over for the evening.

"Back" Projection

With a fine flourish the film ended, the music swelled up and the curtains closed. There was a sudden, unexpected round of applause from the street outside. He had forgotten to black out the back of the screen, with the result that a large and appreciative audience had thoroughly enjoyed this unscheduled view of *noitanoroC ehT*.

How to win friends and influence neighbours? Well, I wouldn't know about that—but I did hear this evening that a new cine club may soon start up there. Just as soon as my friend gets the decorations finished, in fact!

30th May. My club has its annual general meeting this evening; I write this before going along. From what we hear in advance, there are plenty of nominations for the various jobs and



exchanged here

Letters for publication are welcomed, but the Editor does not necessarily endorse the views expressed. Address: "Amateur Cine World," 46-47 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

PIONEERING DAYS

Sir,—My first acquaintance with amateur cine projectors was way back in 1920. In those far-off days, old 35mm. Chaplin films and short lengths were traded, but little in the way of a home projector was available for showing them. The brother of a schoolboy friend of mine became the first projectionist at the newly-opened cinema, converted from the old building once used as a roller skating rink, in my village, Erdington (Birmingham). My friend was a keen mechanic, his father was a tool maker, and between them they designed a simple home projector for 35mm. films, based on the early Bioscope, complete with maltese cross intermittent movement, sprockets, colour screens and lamphouse for electric arc illumination.

The projector was hand-turned and gave a good performance, the arc running off a 24-volt D.C. supply. His own electrical supply was obtained from an Avery compound wound generator driven by a horizontal gas engine which, incidentally, supplied power for his well-equipped workshop. I remember how he wanted to speed up the making of the sprocket teeth for the projector, so I designed a milling attachment for him, to use on his lathe.

These projectors he sold for the princely sum of £12 or so. He must have made some twenty when the slump after the 1918 war set in, then alas, there were few customers.

I often wonder where this pioneer (Eddington was the name) may be, and what he thinks of modern projectors. Perhaps this letter may bring old friends news of each other.

FRIMLEY, ALDERSHOT.

GEO. L. MILLER.

HUNTING THE CLASSICS

Sir,—In order to help pay for a hobby I can no longer really afford (see unpremeditated and unwanted change of address and profession), I have been carrying out repair work on films in our local Patheoscope library. It was while struggling with this task that the only serious disadvantage of 9.5mm. showed itself. It is really amazing the damage the hamhanded can do to a film, and when the sprocket-holes are in line with the centre of the picture, well, I can only wonder just how the poor old library manager ever manages to show a profit!

Some films had merely lost their titles, and I was able to remedy this after long searching through pre- and post-war catalogues. This was a disheartening business, since so many grand films had disappeared from the Patheoscope list. It started me off on a hunt, originally

confined to local junkshops but now extending to the advertising columns of *A.C.W.*, for out-of-print films.

The collection is still in its infancy. *Metropolis* is there, *Christus* is having its notched French titles replaced, and several comedies are being restored as far as is possible. I now also possess *Anguish* and *The Tragic Footbridge*, both of which appear to have been made prior to the Great War. Probably these copies are unique, though I doubt whether anyone but a hardened collector would be interested in them.

Strange Omission

Incidentally, a 1918 newsreel of the victory celebrations brought forth yet another variation on the sprocket holes—a rectangular hole which is both shorter and narrower than the present type. My 200B takes this film perfectly, but it will fit neither the Patheoscope nor the Ensign splicer.

Discussing these old films with a group of enthusiasts from our regimental camera club, I was struck by a strange omission in the Patheoscope catalogue. Why is it, in this air-minded age, that there is no really good flying film to be had? *Gloria* (which I have not yet seen) is still listed, but *Three Girls and Peter* has been withdrawn. I cannot call to mind any other aviation film that has ever appeared in the list.

Best Flying Scenes?

Of all the pre-war aviation films which the members of our group would like to obtain, *Hell's Angels* comes first. The plot is terrible but the flying scenes must surely rank as the best ever filmed. Just think of the fun we could have building a new story round those sequences! We would also like to see *Wings*, which few of us remember or even saw, Conrad Veidt's *F.P.1*, Ralph Bellamy in *Air Mail* and Richard Arlen in *Sky Bride*. Is there any hope of ever seeing one of these on 9.5mm.?

Still, taking things all round, I feel that even with these omissions life with 9.5mm. is still well worth living, if only for the unfailing courtesy and ever-helpful service of Patheoscope Ltd. If only more firms in other fields showed as much consideration for their customers, the world would be a more pleasant place.

Many thanks for the larger *A.C.W.*, although it does present one serious drawback—it will no longer slip into a tunic pocket.

C. R. LIVINGSTONE (Cpl).
KENYA REGIMENT, NAIROBI.

800ft. SPOOLS FOR THE SPECTO

Sir,—Perhaps I can help Mr. Morrissey fulfil his desire to have 800ft. reels for his 8mm. Specto 500. Although a very amateurish mechanic, I bought a Cyldon 900ft. 9.5mm. reel with the idea of converting it to 8mm. The central hole was easily drilled to the right size, and I soon found that the side slots from it were more easy to file straight than fretsaw.

The sides of the spool are held to the centre by a "rivet" effect, the "rivets" being projections from the centre piece, which fit into slots cut in the sides. After a little filing of the rivet heads, I found I had freed one of the sides sufficiently to remove it.

Then came the business of filing down the centre to the correct width for 8mm. This took much longer, but little skill, as by laying a piece of 8mm. film round the centre piece, it was easy enough to judge when the correct amount had been filed away.

"Re-riveting" the side piece on again was a simple matter after the "rivets" had been filed down in proportion to the centre piece. The whole job took me about two hours.

I converted two more spools using a small electric drill with a grindstone attachment. They took me twenty minutes each.

CHEL TENHAM.

P. L. LAW FORD.

SCHOOL FILMS

Sir,—In the May issue, "A Movie Maker's Diary" and "Films by School Children" both mention the scheme for liaison between the amateur cine movement and School and Youth Club film production units, which was discussed by the representatives of the British Film Institute, the I.A.C., the F.C.S., and our own Society.

Denys Davis in his Diary gave a resume of the kind of help which local cine groups and lone workers might be called upon to give, including instruction in the basic principles of film making. He says that some "surprisingly good films... have been made from start to finish by youngsters who received similar instruction."

In fairness, it must be pointed out that the instruction was given by the teachers concerned and not by local cine groups. It may well be that some of the teachers who were responsible for the production of the films are members of a local amateur group, but they carry out this particular activity in their schools as part of a course in film appreciation.

This Society looks forward to seeing the successful launching of the scheme, and the results of the "pilot" project will give an indication of the best means by which a more ambitious plan can be operated.

S. G. P. ALEXANDER,

SOCIETY OF FILM TEACHERS.

Hon. Secretary.

THAT 5ft. 6in. PICTURE

Sir,—I should like to thank Percy Brentnall for kindly sending me a diagram of the seating

showing just how a Noris projector 27ft. away from a 5ft. 6in. by 4ft. 6in. screen could entertain 700 people at one and the same time. The plan has a number of interesting features. The downstairs can seat 450 persons and the balcony 200. Seating consists of forms which accommodate 25 persons each side of the centre aisle. Allowing an average of 18ins. per person seated elbow to elbow, this means a length of some 37ft. 6in. Thus with the forms on the other side of the aisle, and allowing a possible further 9ft. for the centre and two outer aisles, as indicated in the plan, we have a hall width of some 84ft.!

One cannot help wondering what sort of view those standing along the sides of the hall could have had of the 5ft. 6in. by 4ft. 6in. screen, when those standing at the front had to look across a distance of some forty odd feet or more. Mr. Brentnall writes that "at the time of the show there were many standing on the heating pipes, etc., and the place was absolutely full to capacity."

At least this is a tribute to Mr. Brentnall's enterprise.

In all the correspondence published regarding his achievement no one has cited that of the audience. Surely we should pay tribute to their enthusiasm in standing throughout the performance while others were seated on forms during the presentation of a film of local Coronation decorations and carnival, plus two Chaplin comedies, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Oliver Twist*.

SALISBURY.

DEREK C. DAVIDSON.

8mm. ON 8ft. SCREEN

Sir,—Mr. John Morrissey of Tipperary seems very proud of the fact that he has shown his 8mm. colour films to an audience of sixty, using a 5ft. by 4ft. screen and a 500-watt projector. Some months ago I showed a series of Kodachrome travel films I took on the Continent to an audience of nearly 400!

The camera used was the Bolex L8, and the projector, the M8R 500-watt, with an 8ft. screen. A 16mm. fan who sat at the back of the hall (approximately 100ft. from the screen) said if he hadn't seen it he would not have believed it could be done with 8mm.

LYTHAM.

CYRIL E. WILSON.

EVEN MORE

Sir,—Mr. Brentnall's achievement with the Noris is quite possible, and he could do even more if he cared to try for it. As the proud owner of a Pathe Ace I gave a show in a large room using a 5ft. screen. Brightness and definition were good. I now own a Dekko 48 and can get a picture up to 7ft. wide. I always use matt white screens for large pictures and silver ones for smaller sizes—and I used 35mm. and 16mm. before going over to 9.5mm.

LONDON, W.10.

V. BARNES.

A LITTLE FANTASTIC

Sir,—My experience should end the argument about the performance given by Mr. Brentnall's Noris. I purchased a 8mm. Noris and took it to an Odeon theatre where I work. After the show I set the machine up in the stalls and tried it out for screen size. It was very good. Next I went to the circle. By 11.30 p.m. I was back in the box with my Noris projecting through one of the ports on our 20ft. wide screen. It filled the screen and a film could be seen, although I admit it was rather dark, but from the front circle it was very good at a throw of about 80ft.

I know this sounds a little fantastic, but I have the projection staff to prove it.

BLACKPOOL.

R. A. BEASTALL.

THOSE OLD DAYS

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. Dowden, who wants to know where are the films of yesteryear, may like to know that a very good selection of the prizewinners of the last twenty years, foreign as well as British and including *Gaiety of Nations*, are in the I.A.C. Film Library. They are on all gauges, and in some cases 16mm. films have been reduced to 8mm. as well. Some of these films may be considered as good as those of today, others may not be, but all can be studied with advantage.

The address of the Hon. Sec. of the I.A.C. can be found elsewhere in this issue and, in passing, I should point out that a year's subscription is considerably less than the deposit required by many commercial renters, without taking into account other benefits available.

LONDON, S.E.26.

H. W. WICKS,

Hon. Film Librarian, I.A.C.

BETTER FILMS THEN ?

Sir,—Is this a private fight between Mr. Dowden and Mr. Sewell, or can anyone join in ? There is one aspect of the case which neither of them appears to have considered, and that is : how far back does Mr. Sewell go to support his argument that amateur films have not progressed ? If he goes right back to the beginning of the 'mere 25 years' of amateur film history, then obviously so few films, good, bad or indifferent, were produced that it is pointless to build a case on them.

Since he specifically mentions 25 years, Mr. Sewell presumably bases his contention on the period 1929-1939. Omitting the years immediately following 1929, we could perhaps arrive at 1933 as the year in which amateur films really started to get going. Does Mr. Sewell suggest that amateur work in general in the six-year period 1946-53 shows no advance on that done during 1933-39 ? It might well be so, but if he desires our acceptance of his argument, he must give chapter and verse.

I happen to be one of those who carefully hoard their old copies of *A.C.W.*, and so I can offer at least one verse. Mr. Sewell was one of the four judges of the 1948 Ten Best. In the May 1949 issue, those judges are quoted as declaring the films to be "brilliant—far ahead of

any previous year in amateur film history" and "the best group of films I have seen in over 20 years of amateur film viewing". It is true that we are not told which judge said which, but we are also not told that Mr. Sewell disagreed with the verdict. The standard of the Ten Best appears to vary, of course, but the reception accorded later programmes does not suggest that the 1948 films were also "far ahead" of those which have followed them.

BRIGHTON, 6.

P. D. WINTERBOURNE.

UNSUSPECTING

Sir,—*A.C.W.* reports that Fourfold Film Society have changed the title of a film they are making to *The Unsuspecting* because the title they originally chose had been used for a professional film. I thought they might like to know that *The Unsuspecting* was also used for a professional film starring Claude Rains.

A few other boys and I have started work on a 16mm. film called *Boy Wanted*.

MONKSTOWN, DUBLIN. NICHOLAS STAUNTON.

RESTORE THE CUTTING

Sir,—Re "Cut the Cutting" (June), cutting is not done to produce chaos. It allows the producer to shoot all action on a scene at one set-up. It does not matter at what position the action in the film takes place, as it is put in the correct position in cutting.

NEW BARNET.

E. C. DICKINSON.

ALL IN THE SAME MOULD ?

Sir,—The shape of entries for next year's Ten Best depends on the type of films winning awards this year. This moulding has been very apparent during the past three years. What those films are likely to be is in the hands of a few men (good though they may be) who share the same preferences. They must do, or there would be no final decision. In other words, the judges think alike, and that, I maintain, is wrong.

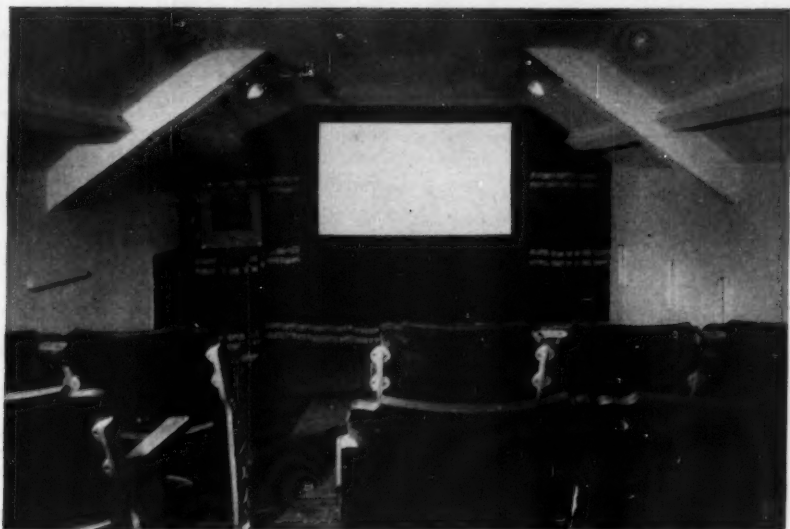
You cannot deny that the amateur film movement is getting Denham-minded. S.O.F. is elbowing 9.5mm. and 8mm. out of the picture. Why must we have a dupe made for the public show ? If it's because of the splices, well, joins are all part of the game. So is the exposure side—copies can contain quite a bit of correction.

Let the judges pick out from the best films submitted sufficient to make up six monthly projection evenings, and then send them round the societies as the Ten Best are now. The winners would be selected by vote by the fraternity itself which, in film parlance, is box office. What do other readers think ?

Certainly unless something is changed we may well be in for an era of untidy holiday films, parliamentary speeches and Agibs and Agabs. Are you satisfied with the present shape of the Ten Best or do you, like me, look forward to the year which will produce films like *Post Haste*, *Fishers All* and *Paper Boat* ?

LONDON, N.7.

GEORGE W. EVES.



J. Hellier asks whether his is the first 16mm. wide screen. All depends on the width of your wide screen. But it looks as if he could safely claim one of the most comfortable home cinemas. (See letter, "Wide-Screen Home Cinema" on this page).

But the despotic judging cartel picked out Post Haste, etc., as well as untidy holiday films, etc. They think alike? The selection of the Ten is always a compromise, arrived at after hours of discussion and constant re-screening.

Dupes must be made because there is not one public show but more than a hundred. As for surrendering the judging to clubs (who might well be among the contestants), what of the entrant who must relinquish possession of his film for six months?

Club judging—though not on so wholesale a scale as that advocated by our correspondent—is already provided for by the Federation of Cine Societies: but the Ten Best have world-wide ramifications which take in lone worker and club alike.

SCENE SHIFTING

Sir,—I would like to say how thrilled the members of Crawley Film were with the wonderful Ten Best trophy. It is by far one of the best we have seen. There is absolutely no doubt of its function and it is a pleasant change from cups, tankards, etc.

I must say, too, that I like the new A.C.W.—and it still goes into the pocket except when my wife has it in her handbag, but may I point out that in the title you have given to my article on the making of *Two Friends* you have moved Crawley from Sussex to Surrey.

CRAWLEY. G. ALEXANDER HOWE.

Perhaps the slip can be ascribed to the movie-maker's habit of blithely shifting places around on the editing bench. Sorry about it, anyway.

MONEY TALKS TOO MUCH?

Sir,—Thank you for a wonderful magazine. The only thing I find wrong with it is that it deals with subjects for the amateur with expensive equipment. Fancy taking four pages of the June issue for "A Car and a Camera on the Continent", the author of which talks of taking 500ft. of Kodachrome! He is not an amateur if he can afford all that film. I am not

saying that such articles should be omitted from A.C.W., but features like "I Filmed a Wedding", "French Village in Surrey", "Need a Script Writer?" and "Gadget Corner" are better. I am a professional 35mm. projectionist and have an old 9.5mm. Coronet.

SAXILBY, NR. LINCOLN.

P. J. BALDERSON.

Our contributor not an amateur because "as a result of lengthy economies augmented by ingenious money-spinning" he managed to acquire some Kodachrome? We have every sympathy with the hard-up, being one of that vast number ourselves (and who isn't these days?), but ability or inability to acquire film stock or expensive equipment has nothing at all to do with amateur status. It is only when the filthily rich pay others to do work on films which they should do themselves that amateur status comes into question.

WIDE-SCREEN HOME CINEMA

Sir,—Readers may like to see the enclosed photograph of my cinema showing the wide screen modification I made a few weeks ago. Seating capacity is 12.

To adopt my projector (a G.B. Bell & Howell 601) for wide screen I cut some brass shim, bent it to make sure that it did not foul the claws and placed it behind the aperture plate, thus masking the top and bottom of the picture by about 1/16th in. in each case. When the plate screws are tightened, the mask moves up and down in the normal way when the picture is framed on the screen.

To increase the width of the picture (formerly 34in. with the standard 2in. lens) without having to move the projector, I purchased a T.T.H. 35mm. f/1.6 projection lens which gives me a 5ft. 2in. picture of wide screen ratio (1.66:1).

Is mine the first 16mm. wide screen?

SIDMOUTH.

J. HELLIER.

ON APPROVAL

Sir,—Having no wish to take up more of your valuable correspondence space than could be helped, my original letter was briefly put in the hope that the various producers of the Royal Tour films would take a tip from a customer and not make them a series of short scenes connected by sub-titles, leaving a breathless audience dizzily wondering what it was all about.

I cannot speak with the authority of Double-Run to whose article Mr. Beney referred me, but I note that he also complains of sub-titles that are either unnecessary or too long. Sometimes there appear to be more sub-titles than picture, as was the case in a film of part of Switzerland that I bought in order to bridge a gap in a film of my own. I still have not put it in because I reckon that it does not rate with the rest. It is a mass of little snippets of this and that, connected by sub-titles and, as we say in Yorkshire, "Neither nowt nor summat".

To return to the Coronation film, I think I was most disappointed because I saw the 35mm. versions at the cinemas first. The 8mm. film was, like the curate's egg, good in parts, but one reel of the set of three had shocking colour throughout and was ultimately sent back by my agent and exchanged.

Now why should the onus of seeing that the reels match satisfactorily be placed on the customer? At £3 6s. per 50ft. the seller ought to be sure that his goods are as perfect as possible. It is quite a lot of money to pay for something that may not be just what is required—an expensive gamble, in fact.

Perhaps Mr. Beney (and others) would let us have them on a week's approval. I think he would probably sell more in the long run, particularly to people who wanted a film for a definite purpose and not just for a general collection. The description in the synopsis cannot possibly tell all, and I, together with members of my club, will be wanting to see the Royal Tour films before we buy this time—or would Double-Run review them for us? HALTON, LEEDS. J. R. STUART-WHITE, B.Ch.D.

IT'S QUICKER THIS WAY

Sir,—With reference to Mr. J. K. Beney's letter, "Package Films" (June), Mr. White's letter was a mere gentle criticism and his "somewhat grudging admission" was merely giving the commercial producers the benefit of the doubt. I was quite disgusted with the Coronation film I ordered when I was in Singapore and delivered to me in England (and a number of reputable dealers share my opinion). I do not suppose that the producers can be held responsible for the reds being a nasty ginger, but at least it should not be necessary to issue these monstrosities to those who, like myself, had ordered well in advance. If, as Mr. Beney suggests, Mr. White's letter is unfair, I would like to point out to Mr. Beney that the final sentence in his own letter is insulting not only to Mr. White but to all of us who buy commercial films.

With reference to B. M. J. Ambrose's letter, "An 8mm. Camera in Singapore," I suspect that

Mr. Ambrose is making the mistake that I made at first in sending his films to England for processing. If he takes his Kodachrome films to Kodak (Malaya) Ltd., Singapore, he will get them returned within fourteen days. They are sent to Australia by air, for which there is a postage charge of 2s. 4d. but they are always returned within the fourteen days. The processing is excellent. Kodak (Malaya) will also supply him with a special box in which to keep his films free from humidity. I spoilt many a film before I got this excellent little box. B.O.A.R. 2. H. PENHALLURICK (REV.)

TROUBLE WITH THE LABS.

Sir,—Double-Run asks, rhetorically (June), whether the labs. ever take any notice of the little notes we send them from time to time about the treatment a piece of film should receive. In my experience they pay not the slightest attention to them.

I recently bought some out-of-date negative bulk 16mm. stock, to try my hand at titles (I couldn't get any similar positive stock) and wound it on my own camera spools. I shot some black-and-white titles and developed two test strips. These indicated that a fairly contrasty developer (I.D.2) and a little anti-fog solution (Johnson's 142) would produce a very satisfactory result for projection as white-and-black.

So I enclosed the following note with the film when I sent it for processing:

"These are titles. Please develop as negatives in a contrasty developer with a little anti-foggant, as the film is a bit stale. Please return my camera spools."

I got back some negatives which, while projectable, were not as good as my test strips, together with a positive print which I did not want, and no spools at all. I returned the unwanted print and paid the bill, less the amount charged for the print, and again asked for my spools back. No result.



While the earth remaineth there will be romance. Out of the Blue, J. J. Butterworth's 1952 Ten Best winner, had a sequel recently—and this picture shows it. (See letter on page 357).

Another cine wedding? Who will be the first to walk under an avenue of tripods? But Enfield C.C.'s Balance Disturbed is purely fictional. This 9.5mm. drama is being shot with a Pathe H, and is planned to run approximately 900ft. This is only one of this keen young Club's current productions, but the budget is zealously watched. The lighting stand on the left was constructed from a hat stand—and the reflector from a pudding basin.



No, Sir, they don't even read the notes we send them! But they won't have another opportunity: that particular firm is on my black list.

NEW MALDEN.

GERALD EAST.

FILM ROMANCE COMES TRUE

Sir,—I thought that you might be interested to know that a sequel to my 1952 Ten Best film, *Out of the Blue*, was shot at Hawkshead on 8th May. The boy and the girl whose romance was featured in that film were married in the old church above the village with its background of Lakeland fells. Allan Coombes of Sale Cine Society and Norman Battersby of Manchester C.S. officiated as cameramen and the weather was particularly kind for the occasion.

My son and his bride became engaged after appearing in *Out of the Blue* and I like to think that the film played no small part in the match-making which culminated in the wedding of Arthur Butterworth and Miss Beryl Briggs in St. Michael's church.

SALE.

J. J. BUTTERWORTH.

Here, surely, is another incentive to film making! Readers will join us in wishing all happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Butterworth—and to our correspondent.

LOOKING AHEAD

Sir,—My future wife and I are looking forward with confidence to the prospect of sitting back in future years and enjoying our memories together through the magic of cinematography. I am indeed grateful to Pathescope for providing me with apparatus at such a modest price.

READING.

J. R. WHEELER.

MODEL

Sir,—S.O.S. Please, please ignore Mr. Cook's plea for space to be given to circle reports. Already we lone workers suffer several pages of club chit-chat in silence. And as for

throwing out Derek Hill's film reviews—surely a model in subtle entertaining instruction and the most reliable guide I know—how dare he! Just one point, D. H. seems a bit late off the mark with his reviews now and again. Can this be improved?

Congrats on the new format and on Jak, another valuable acquisition who I hope we'll see a lot more of. How do you manage to make each issue brighter and more informative than the last? Discard the club news, drop some of the Ten Best blurb, and the A.C.W. will be even better value than it is now, which is saying something.

MALCOLM CALDER.

SWAYTHLING, SOUTHAMPTON.

QUERY CORNER

Sir,—Has anyone any 16mm. shots taken inside Harringay Arena of Dr. Billy Graham and his team? I went there expecting floodlights, but they had been removed, so that the film I hoped to make as a record for our church shows only an excursion starting out, outside the Arena and coming out. I should be grateful if anyone could let me have a copy of their shots, for which I should be prepared to pay.

Let me congratulate you on the excellent new format of A.C.W. The magazine cannot come soon enough for me. I don't miss one word of it and have been a subscriber for over ten years.

138 CHELTENHAM ROAD,
GLOUCESTER.

P. STONIER.

Sir,—I am an 8mm. enthusiast from New Zealand and wish to make a film of London—places and people. Could someone who knows his or her way around spare me a day or the time necessary for a quick tour? I am here from 24th July until 14th August.

c/o 9 KENYON ROAD,
POOLE, DORSET.

EWART WHITE.

Until experience gives them confidence, the first concern of nine out of ten amateurs about to start on a film is not the script or the treatment or the working out of angles but the exposure. It is, of course, quite understandable that this should be so, because no matter how good your ideas, they will count for little if the exposure is hopelessly out. Film stock is the cheapest item in the professional's budget, but we have to cherish every foot. Compensated processing is a valuable insurance against complete failure, but only bang-on exposure yields really good image quality. And getting it gives even the old hand a slight thrill—the same sort of thrill the experienced veteran motorist experiences when he makes a particularly sweet gear change.

We hope the A.C.W. exposure chart will help towards obtaining that quality. We immodestly think that it is the best of its kind available. Certainly it has stood the test of time, its first form appearing twenty years ago, since when it has been periodically revised and brought up to date after exacting experiment and test. Naturally, in order to get the best results you have to *interpret* it to suit your own needs and ideas (but you have to do no less with an exposure meter—which every amateur who does much filming should acquire): for it must be borne in mind that the chart is a synthesis of results secured in a very wide range of conditions, and to that extent it is generalised. But once you have arrived at the best way of interpreting it to suit your own individual way of working, you should get consistently good results.

It is simple enough to use. First find the speed group—A, B or C—of the film you are using, then select from the subject category section at the top of the chart the type of scene you want to shoot and finally read off the recommended exposure for the appropriate light condition.

These apertures apply when the sun is behind or slightly to the side of the camera. For side-lit subjects in brilliant or hazy sun, open up the lens $\frac{1}{2}$ –1 stop. For back-lit subjects under similar conditions, open up 1–2 stops.

Exposures recommended are based on a camera speed of 16 frames per second. Some cameras—such as most models of the Dekko, G.I.C., Keystone, Simplex and Stewart Warner—give $1/48$ th sec. exposure at 16 f.p.s. instead of the common $1/32$ nd. For these, give half a stop more exposure than indicated.

AMATEUR CINE WORLD

EXPOSURE CHART

NOVEMBER	Brilliant sun
DECEMBER	Hazy sun or bright diffused
JANUARY	Diffused, light clouds
FEBRUARY	Dull
	Gloomy, very dull
MARCH	Brilliant sun
APRIL	Hazy sun or bright diffused
SEPTEMBER	Diffused, light clouds
OCTOBER	Dull
	Gloomy, very dull
MAY	Brilliant sun
JUNE	Hazy sun or bright diffused
JULY	Diffused, light clouds
AUGUST	Dull
	Gloomy, very dull

Film Speed

8mm.

A

Gevaert Micro Pan
Kodak Pan

Bauchet Super
Gevaert Super
Kodak Super

9.5mm.

Gevaert Micro Pan

Bauchet Super
Gevaert Super
Pathe SS Pan

16mm.

Gevaert Micro Pan

Bauchet Super
Gevaert Super
Gevaert Pan
Ilford Pan F
Kodak Super
Kodak Plus

Deep shadow ;
dark woodland
paths ;
close-ups in
heavy shadow ;
light interiors.

Narrow streets ;
shady corner of
gardens ;
tree-lined roads
and rivers ;
scenes in small
clearings in
woods ;
close-ups of dark
figures in open
surroundings ;
white on black
titles.

Street and market
scenes without
heavy shadows ;
dark monuments
or vegetation in
the open ;
mid shots at zoos,
parks, fairs,
sports meetings,
farms, etc. ;
groups on the
lawn ;
picnics ;
close-ups of light
figures ;
black-on-white
titles.

Promenades ;
light monuments
and fountains ;
quayside ;
open camp
scenes ;
aircraft on the
ground ;
track motor
racing ;
race courses ;
long shots at
zoos, parks,
fairs, large
rivers, lakes,
etc.

Beach and pier
scenes ;
deck of ship at
sea, open
harbour and
dock scenes ;
moorland
mountain scenes
and bright snow
scenes ;
general aerial
views at low
altitudes ;
general land-
scapes without
dark features.

Seascapes ;
aircraft in the
sky ;
aerial views from
high altitudes ;
light cloud
effects.

	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
...	3.3	4.6	6.5	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13	9	13	18	11	16	22
...	2.8	4	5.6	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	8	11	16	9	13	18
...	2.3	3.3	4.6	3.3	4.6	6.5	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9	6.5	9	13	8	11	16
...	2	2.8	4	2.8	4	5.6	3.3	4.6	6.5	4	5.6	8	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13
...		2	2.8	2	2.8	4	2.3	3.3	4.6	2.8	4	5.6	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9
...	4	5.6	8	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13	8	11	16	11	16	22	13	18	26
...	3.3	4.6	6.5	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13	9	13	18	11	16	22
...	2.8	4	5.6	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	8	11	16	9	13	18
...	2.3	3.3	4.6	3.3	4.6	6.5	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9	6.5	9	13	8	11	16
...	1.6	2.3	3.3	2.3	3.3	4.6	2.8	4	5.6	3.3	4.6	6.5	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11
...	4.6	6.5	9	6.5	9	13	8	11	16	9	13	18	13	18	26	16	22	32
...	4	5.6	8	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13	8	11	16	11	16	22	13	18	26
...	3.3	4.6	6.5	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13	9	13	18	11	16	22
...	2.8	4	5.6	4	5.6	8	4.6	6.5	9	5.6	8	11	8	11	16	9	13	18
...	2	2.8	4	2.8	4	5.6	3.3	4.6	6.5	4	5.6	8	5.6	8	11	6.5	9	13

Classification

B

C

Pan
Pan

Gevaert Ultra Pan

Pan
Pan

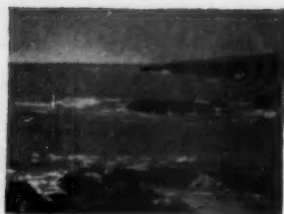
Gevaert Ultra Pan
Pathe VF Pan

Pan
Pan
negative
negative
Negative

Gevaert Ultra Pan
Ilford HP3 Negative
Kodak Super XX

Note : Films in Group C should not normally be used for exteriors.

COLOUR. Accurate exposure of colour film really demands an exposure meter, and Kodachrome is not therefore included in these film groups. But if you have neither a meter nor the exposure guide supplied with each carton of 8mm. and 16mm. Kodachrome, rate the film as coming within Group A, but give half a stop more exposure than that indicated in the chart for Group A films.



Holiday

I had been making film records of our holidays since 1934—the year I first took up cine—but it was not until the last few years that it came to be borne in on me very forcibly that there was a great deal I did not know about amateur film making! It seemed to me that the best way of remedying the deficiency was to become a member of a club, so I joined the Wimbledon C.C. And I also became an avid reader of *A.C.W.* But still it seemed I had a lot to learn.

However, this knowledge did not deter me from entering for the Ten Best competition. The more I read about it, the more eager I was to compete. In 1950 I made the plunge—and was rewarded with a Leader. I stormed the citadel again in 1951 and 1952, but still the gates opened only wide enough to permit of the narrow passage of that nevertheless elusive commendatory strip of film.

Working to Plan

Yes, there was no doubt about it. If a film was to be truly successful it had to be really carefully thought out. It was no good going about it in snippets. Then I read that leading article called "Assessing the Holiday Film" in *A.C.W.*, and a few months after that another one—"Plenty of Close Shots"—on a similar theme. You may recall that these advocated putting aside definite periods for holiday filming—times in which one put all one knew into building up real sequences—instead of frittering away odd shots over the whole fortnight. Two or three afternoons, maybe, would have to be reserved exclusively for filming, and everything else subordinated to it. For the rest of the time the camera could be forgotten.

Well, this meant a radical departure from my usual practice (and, I suspect, from that of most of us), but when I started out for my holiday last year I went determined to follow the Editor's advice in every detail. We went to Cornwall—and the weather frowned, and continued to frown for the greater part of the week. But at least it gave me plenty of opportunity of looking around, picking locations and working out suitable material.

Yet filming, like holiday-making, is fun. We always look on the production of these holiday records as one of the most enjoyable activities of our vacation. To much seriousness would probably spoil the film as well as the holiday—but at the same time planning is absolutely essential. I had already decided that the film should be made up of four short episodes, each quite simple and yet each, I hoped, sufficient to hold the interest while building up the atmosphere of the holiday itself.

All the Family

The principal characters would be my wife and twelve-year-old son, though I would also appear before the camera for a few shots. (After all, if a holiday film doesn't show every member of the family, it is hardly a satisfactory record.) I know Cornwall very well, so it didn't take me long to decide on the locations for the four sequences. I prepared a short script for each episode and, as I was using Kodachrome, waited for the sun to come out.

The first sequence begins with the boy and his mother climbing down a precipitous rock staircase to the sea some five or six hundred feet below. Now, filmed in long shot from the beach I could have secured a quite impressive





in Cornwall

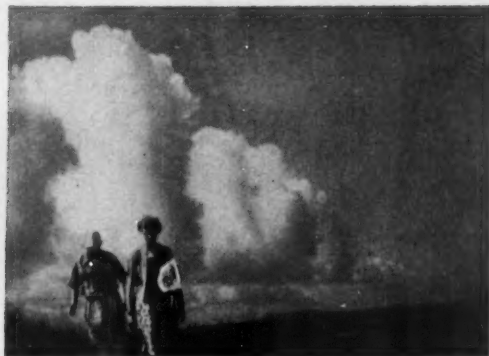
By GEORGE C. ARCHER

The producer of Holiday Boy describes how forethought and careful working to plan turned a family record into one of the most popular of the 1953 Ten Best trophy winners. Perhaps his advice will help you improve your holiday film this year.

scene of the descent, but the audience would soon have got bored with it. Even varying the angle from ground level would not have helped. And, of course, it would have been out of the question to have ground away while wife and son made their slow way down.

The lame way out would have been to take a few shots of them beginning the descent, cut to some general views of sea and sands, and then come back to them when they were only a few feet from the beach. But the apparently hazardous cliff path is so spectacular that the journey down merited featuring for itself. And not only for itself: it would, I hope, also create some amusement as indicating the (literal) lengths to which mother had to go to pander to the boy. In the event, I was gratified by the laughter which greeted the scenes at the public show.

There was only one thing for it. The family had to make that descent five times. (I was



beginning to realise how necessary it was to put aside definite periods for filming!) For some of the shots I was on the path with them; for others I was on the beach. And in each shot they had to be shown getting progressively nearer their objective, so that we had to remember positions fairly exactly in order to ensure smooth cutting.

Similar treatment was required for the sequence showing the boy running along the beach, undressing and darting off into the sea, but this time the repetitions weren't so irksome to contrive. This is the whole point of a planned afternoon's shooting. Instead of taking shots as opportunity offers, you visualise the action as a self-contained sequence in long, medium and close shot; and you have to ensure that the action in the end of one shot is repeated at the beginning of the next so that you can cut smoothly from shot to shot. Were this not done, the action would go forward in jerks.

Smooth Action

For example, if in medium long shot you show John getting ready for a bathe and pulling his shirt over his head, you must get him to pull it back on a little when you come in for a closer shot. The action has to appear continuous on the screen, but by the time you'd finished taking the medium long shot and had walked over to him for the close shot, he would probably have got his trunks on and be already padding his way over the sands. If you film without the co-operation of the subject you can't possible get smooth continuous action from a variety of camera positions. Hence the Editor's advice (which I found worked out so well) to make a real job of work at specified times for holiday filming. But, as I say, it's also great fun—and immensely satisfying.

Once the young "star" of *Holiday Boy* was in the sea, of course, I didn't have to ask him to



PHOTOGRAPHS ON THESE PAGES

are all frame enlargements from *Holiday Boy* (16mm. Kodachrome). Notice that none of these scenes features unusual subjects. Their virtue lies in the author's selection and composition.



More everyday scenes from *Holiday Boy*. Once the producer's son started surf riding, there was no difficulty in getting a series of really natural shots. Other linking shots, such as the boy and his mother strolling off to a nearby tin mine, had to be more carefully thought out.

"act". I just stood by filming while he plunged in and out the waves on his surf-board.

I was fascinated by the ruin of an old tin mine perched high on the edge of a cliff, and had determined to use it as a setting for the second episode in the film. But I needed a mine complete with winding gear if I was to weave a slight story about it as I intended—and the machinery of this ruin had long since disappeared. Then I remembered another mine some fifteen miles away. It didn't have as striking a background as the nearby one, but it still had its winding gear intact.

Two Mines in One

I decided to cut shots of the gear of one mine with more general shots of the other. One or two long shots I wanted of the machinery proved awkward, as there were several cottages nearby that would have given the game away if they had been included in the frame. However, I managed to dodge them, and obtained all the material I wanted in one visit. After that it was just a matter of obtaining suitable matching shots of the local mine—again from a variety of angles—showing the boy wandering over the ruin.

As finally edited, the sequence opens with him looking at a sign-post. He turns away and walks down a lane towards the sea, visible in the distance. We see him with his mother strolling along the cliff until they reach the mine. After several general views of the mine there is a shot of me explaining how the machinery used to work. Here all the close shots of the gear are

cut in. The episode ends with the boy and his mother walking back towards the sea.

I had chosen the quaint little village of Mevagissey as the background for the third sequence, which was quite straightforward. I took all the shots I needed during a fishing trip there. There was little difficulty in ensuring that there was movement of some kind in practically every shot, for the gulls, the bobbing boats, the corks and the nets made up a colourful mosaic which seemed never to stop moving.

The weather upset my plans to conclude the sequence with a shot of the boy catching a fish, but some months after the holiday I thought over the unfinished episode and decided that he should at least catch something for his pains. Why not a cold? A little make-up, a thermometer, a title, one short shot, and the sequence was completed.

Complications

Perhaps the final scenes involved the greatest complications. First I had to wait for several days for suitable cloud effects. (An unbroken blue sky is a dull background for any picture.) Then we had to find a sand-hill high enough and steep enough for our needs. The one we finally chose was covered at the edges with long wavy grass while the centre was smooth, untouched sand.

Although it was ideal for our purpose, the spotless sand presented a formidable snag. The sequence was to show the boy climbing the sand-hill, falling, rolling to the bottom and hobbling back to his mother. Therefore it was

(Continued on page 404)

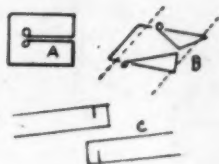
By intercutting shots of the machinery of a distant mine with shots of the ruin of a nearby mine, the author built up a sequence apparently showing an attractive ruin complete with all working parts.



Gadget Corner

By HARRY WALDEN

Paper-Clip Joins



The recent comments in *A.C.W.* on the use of paper-clips for temporarily joining film reminded me that this was the method used by the late Fred Pullin, an independent Wardour Street film editor to whom amateurs of pre-war days were deeply indebted.

I, too, feared that the clips would permanently warp the film. My remedy was to bend the clips from their normal shape (A), to that shown at (B). The corners at the bases of the "legs" were raised slightly with pliers, enough to enable the film—shown by the dotted line—to be flat; the legs themselves were bent outwards to grip the film between the rings and the wires below.

So far as I know I never scratched any film with them, but to be completely safe you could put a fold of paper over the film before clipping. I have not used them for years, as my method of sorting shots on movable envelopes (June *A.C.W.*) fixes the order of joining well enough without clips. I recall only one difficult case, a 9.5mm. sports film in which I did not know the people and had to call in help to identify the sequence of shots taken on three cameras. I cut the leading end of each shot diagonally and wrote its number on the film with a grease pencil. After the film was spliced, the grease pencil came off with a rub of the thumb.

Another very old trick for a temporary join is to cut half-way across the two end frames with a pair of scissors. The cuts on the two ends are made on opposite sides of the film so that they slot into one another (as at C). It is quickest to turn the two end frames face to face or lay the strips in line with one another so that one snick of the scissors serves to cut both slots at once.

Circular Screen

A.C.W.'s note on circular screens sent my mind back to another sort of "circular" screen which was made on a girl's wooden hoop. This was in the days of low-powered projectors, and the purpose was to provide a screen picture by back projection which would be bright enough for a large audience. The hoop was about 5ft. across, to the best of my recollection, and the screen material was draughtsmen's thin tracing paper. The paper was laid on the floor with the hoop on top, and was cut to the shape of the hoop with an outside margin of about two

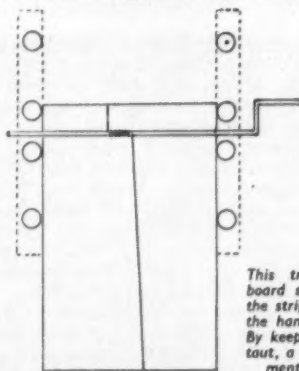
inches. The margin was cut into every few inches to enable flaps to be folded over the rim of the hoop for fastening.

The paper was then damped all over. Paste was applied round the overlapping outer edge and the flaps were folded over the rim of the hoop and stuck down. As the paper dried it stretched as taut as a drum, and resulted in a very good translucent screen. There is probably still scope for this method at public shows of 8mm. films. (The fact that modern traffic conditions may have led to the disappearance of hoops does not render the idea impracticable.)

Travelling Title

This is an idea for a travelling title which will run smoothly. The drawing shows the set-up. The title is mounted on a piece of stiff board of the required size, arranged so that it can slide beneath the camera lens. Its course is governed either by strips of wood at the sides or by pegs or rollers. Behind the board is a rod, bent at one end into a handle and turning in bearings affixed to the titler.

A piece of string runs from one end of the movable board, takes several turns round the rod and is then fastened to the other end of the board. The string is tied taut at each end to



This travelling title board slides between the strips of wood as the handle is turned. By keeping the string taut, a smooth movement is ensured.

screw eyes, which are not turned right home. Any slight slack in the string can be taken up by turning the screw-eye, winding the string round the neck of the screw.

FRENCH FEDERATION PRODUCES COMPOSITE FILM

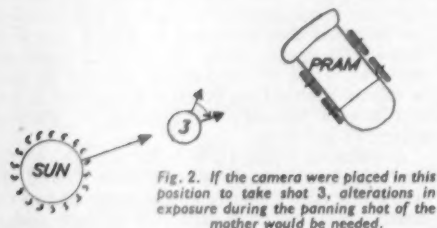
The Federation Francaise des Cine-Clubs is preparing a composite film of extracts from the best French amateur films made between 1934 and 1939. A production on the making of a film is also planned. The Federation now boasts a membership of 200 clubs with a total of 60,000 members.

Fig. 1. Diagram shows the shot-by-shot camera positions for Centre Sprocket's baby-on-the-lawn script. These positions are chosen to obtain the best lighting effects.

You have just one charger and you want to film baby. How do you set about it? Spread a rug on the lawn? You will get some sort of picture of baby no doubt, but in years to come will it remind you of what he is like now? When you think of baby, what comes first to mind? Do you see him on a rug on the lawn, or do you think of his high chair and its aura of crumbs on the carpet, the sticky fingers groping for the

One Charger, One Baby on the Lawn

By CENTRE SPROCKET



door-knob and the chubby legs clambering laboriously over the front doorstep? Or if he is very young, do you not think of prams and feeds? A young baby knows of little else.

These are the things you should try to get on film. The secret of good family filming is to show people as they really are, whether your subject is baby or Granny. If you stick to this rule, you will eliminate nine-tenths of the usual troubles from camera consciousness. And your film will be most natural if it tells a story.

By a story I do not mean an elaborate conception showing what happened when Dad came home in someone else's raincoat. And I certainly do not mean one of those cute little films, so beloved of the Americans, putting over a purely verbal gag in six shots and two or three subtitles. Perhaps you know the sort of thing:

M.S. Johnny hands teacher a note.

C.S. Teacher says—

Title: "So God has sent you a baby brother!"

C.S. . . . teacher says.

C.S. Johnny nods and says—

Title: "Sure—and Pop says He knows where the money is coming from!"

C.S. . . . Johnny says. (Fade Out.)

Title: "The End."

This is an authentic example—an example, to my mind, of what *not* to do. But although it is

easy to pick holes in this sort of script, it has at least two points in its favour: it tells a story and it does so in less than 30ft.

Many family filers fight shy of any sort of story because they feel it must require several hundred feet of film. So it does, if you are tackling fiction. But I maintain that domestic activities call for no more than a little attention to continuity. Shoot your subjects *doing* something, film them so it can be seen *what* they are doing, and you will have story enough for a family film. Even a single charger can be used in this way and once you have tried it, you will find it the only satisfactory approach to shooting family footage off the cuff.

Placing or Puzzling

To show you what I mean, here is a "one-charger script" on filming baby. This script is not intended as a cut and dried recipe, but rather as an indication of the way I should tackle such a subject. So instead of providing a dry list of angles and action, I will explain the whys and wherefores as we go.

There are two ways of starting a sequence: by placing or by puzzling. The "puzzle opening" can be very effective. You can, for example, show a furious agitation of the cherry tree, followed by a glimpse of George as he clammers up to pick cherries. Unless the pace is maintained, however, smart openings are a liability. So for a quiet little film about baby, let's begin by placing the subject. This means a long-shot, or in this case a medium long-shot (M.L.S.). So we have—

Shot 1, M.L.S. Pram outside front porch.

There is a little more to it than that, of course. You must choose how the pram is to be placed

with respect to the porch and the sun so that the action will be well lit and baby will not get the sun in his eyes. Fig. 1 shows a reasonable arrangement; the camera positions and angles for each shot have been indicated by the numbered circles and arrows.

Don't be disturbed because baby is not visible in shot 1: you will show plenty of him later. Meanwhile, the gentle shaking of the pram will whet the appetite preparatory to—

Shot 2, Medium Close Shot (M.C.S.) The pram, showing baby lying in it.

Don't Rehearse!

You will notice we do not get too near baby. You can stimulate the interest of your audience by not letting them have too good a look at first. To carry this device a stage further, and also to get a shot of Mother, let us now have—

Shot 3, Mid Shot (M.S.) Mother appears at front door. *Pan to follow* as she goes to pram, pushes hood down and croons over baby.

Usually this sort of shot is best taken unrehearsed. Make all your technical preparations first, then call Mother, tell her what is required and shoot. If she has not seen baby for half an hour, she will croon quite readily. If she has rehearsed the action only ten seconds earlier, she will probably be self-conscious and unconvincing.

At this stage, we shall be repaid for our forethought in choosing the best position for the pram. Suppose, for a moment, that the pram had been on the other side of the porch, as in Fig. 2. Then Mother would have appeared first in the shadow of the porch in a light calling for $f/3.5$, perhaps. Then she would walk into full sunlight requiring $f/7$. Exposure would be seriously out at one or both ends of the shot and, in addition, Mother's face would be lost in shadow as she looked down at baby.

Now look once more at Fig. 1. You will see that although Mother appears in $f/3.5$ shade, as before, she is back-lit by the sun as soon as she leaves the porch. This part of the shot calls for $f/5$ and, since the appearance in the porch is of secondary importance, I would take the whole thing at $f/5$. The back-lighting of Mother will improve the picture by putting sparkle in her hair, and her face is well lit.

The audience has now been kept waiting long enough for a good view of baby, so here it is at last—

Shot 4, Close Shot (C.S.) (From Mother's point of view) Baby looks up and chuckles or cries—Baby will direct the action for himself!

Don't forget to use a supplementary lens for this shot if yours is a fixed-focus camera.

Now we have used nearly half our charger already, so if we are going to show baby being fed, we must get a move on—

Shot 5, M.C.S. Looking up at Mother as she reaches forward and lifts baby from the pram.

This is straightforward enough, provided you are prepared to grovel on the gravel in order to get part of the pram in the bottom corner of the picture.

Natural Fade

Next we want to make some sort of transition from outdoors to indoors. Once again we will use straightforward methods—

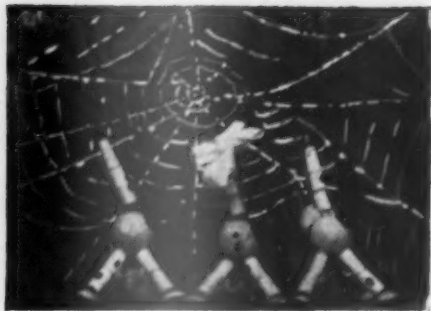
Shot 6, M.S. (Camera position as for shot 3) Front doorway. Mother, with baby, enters from left and disappears into darkness of hall.

This makes a natural fade-out, but if you think too much of the doorway will remain visible, conclude by moving one hand from left to right across the lens. The next shot will commence with the uncovering of the lens from left to right to produce a wipe-in effect.

If we proceed immediately to a shot of Mother feeding baby, we get a rather absurd effect. In one shot Mother is carrying baby in her arms; in the next she is seated, holding the bottle. Strangely enough, Mother need be off the screen only two or three seconds to allow us

"When in trouble, cut in a shot of a baby or a dog!" That, so they say, was the advice given to the earliest film editors. Certainly babies and dogs are two of the most popular subjects with audiences, but neither Centre Spracket nor Hereford C.S. is content to rely on subject appeal alone. Here members are seen shooting the first scene of their production showing the history of the Order of St. John.





When you've finished filming the children, how about filming for the children? And puppet films amuse adults, too, as the success of B. T. Smith's *The Silver Fox* in the 1952 Ten Best competition proved.

to believe she has settled down and arranged baby comfortably on her lap. We shall use those two or three seconds to establish both the setting and subject of the next sequence, like this—

Shot 7 (Wipe in from left to right) C.S. Baby's bottle standing on a table. After 2 seconds, Mother's hand enters and removes the bottle.

Now we can show Mother with baby—

Shot 8, M.C.S. Mother seated with baby on her lap. She tests the temperature of the milk against the back of her hand.

We cannot spare enough film to show the whole of this process, so we shoot only the important part. Then, again to conceal the time lapse, we must omit the bottle from the start of the next shot.

Shot 9, C.S. Baby waits anxiously. The bottle enters the picture and baby starts feeding.

We have only enough film left for two or three shots now, but with this subject, we can continue equally easily for 2ft. or 20ft.

Shot 10 C.S. Mother looks down admiringly.

Shot 11, C.S. Continuation of shot 9.

Shot 12, C.S. Baby's toes wriggle

—and so on, until you run out of film!

Next month I shall discuss the problem of fitting a short "story" like this into a reel of other material. If you have found this "one-charger script" helpful, please let me know. You may not have a baby to hand, but nevertheless it may have suggested how to tackle some other problem. If the demand justifies it, I shall be delighted to give you my idea of a one-charger script for one or two other subjects—preferably subjects of your choosing.

Annual Warning

Let me give my annual warning about the dangers of holiday filming! Not the dangers to life and limb, for if you fall out of the switchback camera in hand, you are not the sort of person to take advice from me or anyone else. It is your apparatus that I am concerned about. Film exposed to heat is little better than film exposed to light, so keep your camera and your chargers cool. On the other hand, don't water-cool them. Sea spray is easily overlooked until you discover,

too late, that it has got on your lens and your pictures have gone fuzzy. Of course, the lens can be cleaned, but in the meanwhile you have wasted film.

With sand, the damage to your equipment may be irreparable. In one of the earliest "9.5mm. Reels", I warned you about getting sand in the camera, particularly in the Pathe H which has a tripod bush communicating directly with the camera motor. This year I must extend the warning to cover the Pat, for in this camera, too, sand can enter the motor via the tripod bush. So keep it clear of sand!

A telescopic tripod is another highly vulnerable item. If you get sand in between the tubular sections, the whole thing will jam solid. It will be a nice firm job, but telescopic? No! So you see why the manufacturer of a Danish tripod printed on the carton "Hold rent for sand"—Danish for "keep clear of sand".

Talking of tripods, I am still wondering why Denys Davis wants to encumber his tripod with tape measures to get the legs all the same length. Surely it is simpler to bring the three feet together? In any case, identical leg lengths are neither a prerequisite for, nor a guarantee of, a level tripod. Hence the de luxe jobs complete with spirit levels. But personally I have a naive faith in the picture in the viewfinder. If it looks straight, it will do.

9.5mm. Tape

I cannot close this month's reel without passing on a tip from Mr. D. Jeater of 9.5mm. Circle No. 8. He has discovered that Nebrotex slide-binding tape is just 9.5mm. wide. It is thinner than the familiar Sellotape and available in various colours.

Mr. Jeater suggests that white and red tapes could be used to mark the beginning and end of a reel respectively. The more opaque varieties may be used to produce "wipe" effects if trimmed very obliquely before application. Unfortunately, many tapes of this kind become rather messy after a year or two. Only time will show whether the Nebrotex tape is free from this drawback.

Time They Grew Up

Says GEORGE H. SEWELL, F.R.P.S.

Personally I would have imagined that in this day and age we had had enough of antagonism and rivalry to last us for a very long time. Yet it goes on all the time. For some years past, the various amateur cine organisations have been alternately vying with each other and making half-hearted attempts to get together.

There have been conferences and discussions, discussions, discussions. There have been attempts at bargaining; "We have more of this type of member than you have. We will enter into an alliance with you if you will give up these members to us, for we feel we are entitled to them." And now we have a somewhat undignified discussion between two of the leading bodies as to the relative merits of their two insurance schemes.

I comment on these things because, in one way or another, I am connected with most of the bodies and, frankly, it disgusts me to see grown men and women behaving like disgruntled kids in a nursery fighting over their toys. None of the reservations which have hitherto been stumbling blocks are, in fact, worth two penn'orth of cold gin, and would cease to matter tomorrow morning if the little "empire builders" in the various organisations threw over their foolish aspirations and set out honestly and objectively to find a means of co-operation on behalf of the one thing that really matters, the hobby of cinematography.

If A and B both have lots of lone worker members and lots of society members, let each keep its own but try to work out a *modus vivendi* by which the members of both organisations will, in fact, have greater advantages than they do now. If Messrs. C & D in the respective organisations each worry a little that they might lose personal status if such an amalgamation came about, let each realise that he (or she) will still be able to exercise his (or her) skill in organisation, but in a wider field. A little more goodwill and a little less suspicion would do a great deal for the movement.

Sea Suggestions. I am going to sea for a couple of weeks to do a job of filming. The cameraman rang me up and asked: "What about taking a gimbal head?" Can you recognise a gimbal when you see it? It is the device they use to suspend a mariner's compass to keep it horizontal, however much the ship is rolling.

The compass is supported in a ring with a pair of spindles at opposite sides of the circumference. These are free to rotate in bearings in a larger ring which itself has spindles and

bearings at opposite sides of its circumference but at right angles to the original pair.

You can make a support of this kind to hold a camera on a tripod, but it must have a heavy counterbalance weight hanging down so that the centre of gravity is below the gimbal. Then the camera will remain upright, even if the vessel on which the tripod stands is rolling.

Alternatively, in a studio setting of, say, a ship's cabin, the device can be used to swing the camera to give the illusion of the boat rolling, but don't forget that if there are any hanging lamps that remain stationary or the bodies of the actors do not respond to the imaginary roll, the effect will not come off.

My cameraman is going to take a tin of vaseline to protect the dural and other metal parts of the camera and equipment. (It would be equally valuable at the seaside). Needless to say, we have large waterproof sheets to cover the cameras. For one camera it is a sheet of green Willesden rot-proof canvas. For the other we bought a groundsheet from a disposals stores.

Incidentally, we were worried about our lighting units when the vessel rolled. Then somebody suggested that we should make a triangular wooden platform to fit under the base of each lamp unit, with a screw eye in its centre, and a wire guy and turnbuckle to hold the lamp standard down on the platform.



One club that can safely claim to have grown up is High Wycombe F.S., as "Spotlight" in the May issue indicated. Here members enact a scene for Paper Capers, the Society's latest production which is described as "a fast-moving light comedy."

That will make the whole thing firmer. We shall be able to slide the set-up around on the open grids in the engine room, and when we are working on the convex decks of the ship, a single wedge can be thrust under one corner of the platform. It occurred to me that some such device might be used under some of the rather top-heavy lighting equipment used by amateurs.

The Pro. Commenting on a film I made special reference to one character, whose interpretation stood out head and shoulders above the rest. I said "Either he is playing 'himself' (by which I meant that he was repeating what he did in everyday life) or he is a most competent actor." It transpired that he was an experienced professional.

I thought of the years that man, and pros. like him, put in to attain their proficiency and how so very many amateur "actors" disdain even the slightest preparation for their parts, expecting to be moulded by the director. Even the skilled modeller prefers to work with clay that has been conditioned for the job, and the professional director prefers actors who have tried to learn something about the parts they are to play. Only the genius can take the untried and make them into stars on the screen. How many geniuses have we among amateur film directors?

Woolly Interiors. Lately I have seen a number of films in which first class, crisp exterior photography is accompanied by flat, woolly photography of interiors, a state of affairs which appears to be accepted without question by the producers. Yet there is no need for this. The main reason for it is that the interiors have been shot with insufficient light with large aperture lenses used at, or near, maximum aperture.

Many of these lenses, particularly those of earlier manufacture, are quite incapable of giving sharp definition when wide open, and even with the best lenses, focal depth of field is reduced to the minimum. Another factor is that apparent sharpness is greatly influenced by the type of lighting. Broad floods of frontal light from soft reflectors can make a subject look more unsharp than properly placed modelling light from the correct angles, preferably including some spot-lighting.

Cut the Cackle! Dr. Van Essen, inveighing against editing (June), builds up a false picture and comfortably imagines that he has attacked the essential principle. He refers to editing as "technical obsession", but the true editor is concerned more with the artistic functions of film than with its technicalities. I agree that the "technical matters" mentioned in his final paragraph present few difficulties, but a man can get focus, exposure, lighting and composition correct in every scene and still make a bad film.

If "the child refuses to conform", how will Dr. Van Essen ensure that every shot he takes "off the cuff" will fit in? And if it doesn't, why should it be a crime to cut it out? He may find that, by reversing the order of some scenes, he can give greater clarity and meaning to his film.

Why should that be regarded as obsession with technical matters?

Dr. Van Essen requires the amateur to attain much higher standards in direction and photography (not to mention second sight) than even the most outstanding professional could boast, and advocates slipshod methods that he would not tolerate in the operating theatre.

Nice Touch. Yesterday I received a request for my annual subscription from one of the leading film organisations. The letter ended: "In doing so, we would express very great appreciation of the support with which you have favoured us in the past and which we hope will continue, since it is only by the support of its growing body of members that this Association can hope to progress in its aims." Tact is the cement which holds a club together.

Both Ends. It has always been important to protect lens glasses from dirt, grease and the action of chemicals suspended in the air. It is even more important with the delicate surfaces of bloomed lenses. You should have lens caps for both ends of all your lenses and keep them on whenever the lenses are not in use.

Single Blade Scraper. I always use a Premier splicer because it is robust enough to remain in precise adjustment over long periods of heavy work. Now this excellent machine has been made even better by the introduction of a new scraper. In the old model the end of the film rested on a hard steel bar and a hand-held serrated scraper was used to remove the emulsion. The device is efficient but a little fussy.





Don't treat the professional with contempt, pleads George Sewell below. When we see this sort of recording equipment and find the illustration on the opposite page described as "a corner of No. 3 cutting room," we feel more inclined to treat him with awe. All the apparatus is 16mm. It is part of the equipment used by Stanley Schofield Productions Ltd., who recently opened a new extension to their premises in Old Bond Street. Many amateurs—and professionals—learned to make films with the advice and assistance given by Stanley Schofield, who is a welcome visitor to the clubs. His 16mm. professional film organisation, handling a wide range of subjects from medical to motor-racing, can fairly claim to be one of the most progressive in the country.

In the new design the central bar is replaced by a similar bar that is 3in. longer and projects out in front of the splicer. On this hard steel bar moves a carriage 3½in. long and carrying a vertical flexible spring-steel blade. A dozen swift strokes to and fro clean away the emulsion and scrape the base to a precise depth along a path of precise width. The blade has vernier adjustment.

The metal of the blade was the subject of several years' experiment, and it retains its sharpness for a long period. It is possible to make perfect splices at high speed with great ease. Existing splicers can be fitted with the new scraping device by the makers, while complete new splicers incorporating the new scraper are on the market. This is the most economical solution to the problem of precision splicing of 16mm. film that I have yet seen.

My Pal! How I purred with delight when I read the hard-hitting letter from Jim Jeffrey saying what has needed to be said for long enough. For all the implied superiority of some of the leading amateurs, there are few of them indeed who would match up to the requirements of even a straightforward and simple professional documentary job.

The photography in an overwhelmingly large proportion of amateur films would get the perpetrators the sack from all but the third rate hack film firms. Not only is it a fact that, technically, most professionals begin where the amateur leaves off, but in many other ways the young keen professional leaves the amateur far behind. Get into a group of them and ten to one you will find they have a wide knowledge of current films and the ability to discuss the finer points of direction and editing.

Yet how many film production societies, or lone workers, for that matter, include the study of films and film making methods in their

syllabus! (I know that dozens of people will be able to write to me telling me of their prowess in these directions, but hundreds will be silent).

Too many amateurs want to run before they can walk, decry the importance of aspects of technique about which they are not disposed to take sufficient trouble, talk learnedly about obscure points of direction, pontificate upon a basis of insufficient knowledge, but are not industrious enough to make a true study of their subject or to fit themselves for the tasks they undertake under a variety of pompous titles. All of which would not matter very much if they were not looked up to as oracles by those around them, not a few of whom, from a more modest level, are, in fact, proceeding on sounder lines.

Go Easy on the Jargon! Visiting the Royal Academy summer exhibition the other day, I heard a young woman, evidently anxious to impress her male escort with her knowledge of things artistic, say with great earnestness: "Oh! What wonderful prospectus!" Apropos the Academy, I am always most deeply impressed by the best of the portraits, perhaps because they are based on principles so often missing from amateur films: careful observation, rejection of the unimportant, portrayal of the most significant.

All is Gaiety. It is nice to have Mr. Dowden's little *amende honorable*. Perhaps his idea of the meaning of "tatty" is different from mine. In my surroundings it has always been used rather in the sense of "cheap, shabby, of little value," but apparently he didn't mean that.

However, all is now sweetness and light and G.H. ("Gilbert Harding") Sewell retires beaming to his cobwebbed film store. Incidentally, the I.A.C. have a catalogue giving the names and dates of production of lots of early films, and have many of them in their library. Some are very good indeed.



8mm. is ideal for the family filmer, but there's no reason why more ambitious work shouldn't be attempted on this gauge as well. Smallheath & District Photographic Society Cine-Eight Section are tackling a fiction film, *The Man She Left Behind*, as their first production. Left to right: script supervisor, co-continuity girls, cameraman, actor, director, club president, and props man.

Family Filming on 8mm.

DOUBLE RUN reviews the latest entries submitted for his 'competition', and concludes his comments on package films.

The Babe in the Wood is the title of a 50ft. Kodachrome family film made by Mr. K. McManus of St. Helen's, Lancs. A little girl, accidentally left behind by her sisters and brother, wanders through a wood hoping to find them. Her way is blocked by a stream, but a boy helps her across and together they find the others.

This is a fine subject for a family film and Mr. McManus, working to a script, has produced a very pleasing result. He used a Cine Kodak 8-20 with f/3.5 non-focusing lens, and most of his camerawork is very steady—though one shot of five children sitting on a tree trunk pans slightly to the left to include the end child and then back again.

Pans should be smooth, beginning and ending on a point of interest, and should *never* wander back in the direction from which they came. I think it is usually better to avoid them altogether, unless you are following a fast moving object. Yet camera movement, if really purposeful, can add to one's enjoyment of a film; for example, Mr. McManus tilts down from the girl to reveal the stream that blocks her way. This is a dramatic way of introducing the stream, and it emphasises the girl's situation.

Close-Ups Needed

As so often with family films, I was left wishing that there were more close-ups of the family. In another of Mr. McManus's films there is a magnificent C.U. of a small boy laughing as he struggles to eat a large sweet. He

seems quite unconscious of the camera (presumably someone standing well away from it was doing something to amuse him) and the shot was really delightful. It is C.U.s like this that give a family film its appeal.

A recent book on 8mm. filming contains the heretical advice that the best family films are taken quite simply, by letting everyone do just what they like. This is nonsense, for most people like to wave bashfully at the camera! The successful family filmer gives his actors something to occupy their attention. The more ambitious like Mr. McManus, work out a story (however slight) to suit their particular circumstances and persuade the family to act in it.

Simple Credits

The danger of doing this is that, unless the director is very careful, there may be a loss of spontaneity. In Mr. McManus's film there are one or two slightly uncomfortable moments. For example, the boy who helps the girl over the stream is inclined to over-act, and the children indulge in a little too much pointing, the favourite gesture of every amateur actor. But I still found this a thoroughly enjoyable film.

One last reminder about family films: keep the credit title simple. A horrible example of how a film's effect can be thrown away occurs in the Ten Best winner, *While the Earth Remaineth*. The ludicrously pretentious credit titles at the end of this otherwise moving film provide light relief that I am sure the makers never intended.

Country Cameo by Mr. Ray Young of St. Leonards on Sea runs to 90ft. of very pleasant Kodachrome. There are no sub-titles, but the main and end titles are most attractively lettered in red on a background of white grainy wood with a surround of green leaves. We follow the morning's adventures of two small boys in blue jerseys and dungarees, who run across the fields, clamber up trees (in one shot we look down from a tree at the boy below, as if we were seeing him through the climber's eyes), wander by pools, watch the trains, fight a "gun battle" and walk home hand-in-hand. The camerawork is steady, continuity is well-preserved and except for an occasional shot held a shade too long, the boys seem untroubled by the camera.

Entirely Convincing

Altogether, it is the most interesting entry I have so far seen. The story is entirely convincing (I liked the way the older boy is shown stopping to help the younger one over an obstacle). The camera used was a Revere 88, and the whole film, except for the titles, was filmed at f/5.6 and f/8 one morning between 7.30 a.m. and noon. It is a fine achievement, for the shots are not only interesting in themselves, but form part of a carefully constructed and cohesive whole. I don't suppose it was scripted, but it was certainly carefully planned—and well worth the trouble.

Incidentally, most entries for my competition have featured very young children. Although I welcome these, I would also like to see some of the older children, as the problems they raise are rather different. Remember that entries can be sent to me at any time, c/o A.C.W. I am looking forward to seeing and commenting on some interesting holiday films this year. If you can spare yours for a few days, I'd be very pleased to see it—especially if it features children.

PACKAGE FILMS: CONCLUSIONS

A few 8mm. package films suffer from a lack of sub-titles, but most of them have far too many. For example, *Gun Town* (G.B. Moviepak, 180ft. monochrome) has 23. They slow the story down without always making it easier to follow. A sub-title intended to explain what a character is saying should be spliced in just after he begins to speak and just before he stops speaking, so that it is quite clear who is talking. Twice in this film, sub-titles occur between shots of the heroine and shots of the villain, with the confusing result that the villain's lines seem to be spoken by the heroine!

This Castle film is apparently a very condensed version of a feature length Western and has to be projected at 24 f.p.s. It contains some spectacular shots, and action sequences such as the two attacks by Indians, come over well. But the plot is far too involved for such a short film.

The lengthy sub-titles continually remind one of the lack of sound, and the climax loses much of its effect because we cannot hear the report from the heroine's gun and so do not immediately understand why the villain suddenly falls over. A puzzling moment is provided by a brief shot of a girl being swept up on to an attacking Indian's horse. I can only guess that, in the original version, the heroine was kidnapped! The photographic quality is very good except for the last few feet, which are decidedly "rainy".

Novel Comedy

Chimp the Sailor (G.B. Moviepak, 170ft. monochrome) is an amusing novelty item, although it has 16 rather chatty sub-titles (e.g., "Chimp cuts himself adrift. Oh dear! He can't row or swim"). These were not perfectly aligned, as more space had been left above the lettering than below it, instead of vice versa. At first the chimp's antics did not seem particularly hilarious, but when I remembered to run the print through at its proper speed of 24 f.p.s., the action became quite lively and entertaining. The photographic quality was excellent, but the frames did not seem to have enough height for my projector gate mask, and a white line was visible at the top and bottom of the picture throughout the film.

I was impressed by the way the chimp's white sailor suit was always clearly defined against the sky. Perhaps a yellow filter was used to darken the sky—or could back projection have been used so that the chimp in the studio was more brightly lit than the background? Or were dark days chosen for the filming?

Some amateurs use a yellow filter for all outdoor shots, and open up the lens by one stop to compensate for the loss of light. This slightly



A production still from *The Caretaker*, an 8mm. I.A.C. prizewinner now available from the Carlin Enterprise.

Belfast C.P.A. C.S. called on the University Players, a popular local drama group, to act in their first production, a 200ft., 8mm. comedy entitled *Big Head*. The whole film was shot in ten hours, including time taken in set construction.



darkens the sky so that the clouds stand out, but an additional lens hood is needed if the filter is to be properly shielded. Except for scenic films, I rather doubt if the filter is worth the trouble. Personally I always try to avoid large expanses of sky when using monochrome, as I find that a dark background is much more pleasing—and it does not show up dirt or scratches on the film! With colour, on the other hand, the blue of the sky makes a fine background for any shot.

If you are thinking of including domestic pets in your next family film, you will be interested to notice how simply this director manages to give the impression that the chimp is steering the yacht. He splices close shots of the chimp playing with the helm in between shots taken from the bow showing obstacles as the boat swerves past them. This is quite effective—and yet what could be simpler to arrange?

Commentary Missed

Mine's a Terrier (Dawn Trust, 230ft. monochrome) has 14 sub-titles introducing 14 different breeds of terriers. The dogs are usually shown in M.S., and then the cameraman moves in for a C.U. of their heads. Unfortunately, in the copy viewed the tops of their heads were very often out of the picture, due, presumably, to poor reduction printing. There was a good shot of a Scottie looking down at the camera and some very appealing shots of puppies; but I would have preferred to see many more shots of the dogs playing or eating, and far fewer posed portraits.

As it is, one really needs the commentator (who is given a credit on this 24 f.p.s. print) to tell one what to look for. More human interest would have helped the film along, and the presence of people would have given some idea of the relative size of the dogs. The film was

supplied with a fully cued leader, and print quality was moderate.

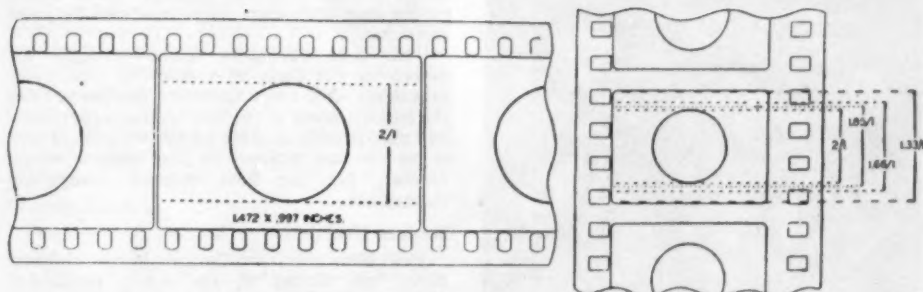
I finished my screenings of two films from each of the leading distributors with *The Caretaker* (Carlin Enterprise, 180ft. monochrome). I have nothing new to say about this 16 f.p.s. 1951 I.A.C. prizewinner except that the one sub-title, a quotation from Milton, seems curiously inappropriate. But I welcome it as another 8mm. amateur film made available for all to see.

Room for Improvement

"I can't see how anyone not completely moronic could buy package films; they're so bad!" wrote a friend. After screening twenty prints (only a tiny fraction of the selection now available), I don't entirely agree with him. There have been some entertaining films among them, and print quality has, on occasion, been really good. On the other hand, there is a great deal of room for improvement in the selection of films, their re-editing (of which there is at present too little), their sub-titling (of which there is far too much) and in the quality of the prints that reach us.

It can be a chancy business to buy a package film, because one never knows what defects there may be in any particular print, and distributors cannot always be relied upon to issue only those films that will survive a silent screening. For example, I recently saw two excerpts from Abbott and Costello films. One was about a car chase and relied on fast moving visual comedy. The other was about a basketball team, and the early part relied largely on dialogue. Yet both were issued as silent films. Definition, too, is sometimes unsatisfactory, although certain of the colour prints impressed me very favourably and the 8mm. dupes were really sharp.

(Continued on page 394)



New Wide Screen Technique

Paramount claim that VistaVision, the latest big screen system, gives picture quality superior to that of any other method yet used. Cinarama, which preceded it in America, has yet to be seen over here, but certainly none of the wide screen or CinemaScope productions so far shown can rival the image quality of the VistaVision demonstration films shown in London recently.

Their remarkable clarity is said to be obtained by exposing standard 35mm. negative *horizontally* to give frames two-and-a-half times the normal size. When the image is optically reduced to standard size, grain is also reduced; the resulting picture has a striking sharpness of definition from foreground to extreme distance.

gives improved quality

By DEREK HILL

Because of this improved quality, Paramount are recommending exhibitors to use the largest screens they can instal. VistaVision can be shown in four aspect ratios—1.33 : 1, 1.66 : 1, 1.85 : 1 or 2 : 1. The demonstration at the Plaza was shown in the 1.85 : 1 ratio on a 45ft. by 23½ft. screen.

Yet these pictures are easier on the eye than any big screen films I have seen to date. The proportions seem better balanced; scenes have not been arranged to fit the screen, as in CinemaScope. Actors never looked as if they were about to be beheaded, and nobody lay down or swam.

Students of cinema in the audience must have been profoundly shaken to hear the commentator blandly affirm that now there would be no necessity for "those annoying close-ups which had to be cut in to the old postage stamp films so that audiences could recognise the stars and see their emotions!" But the point was certainly made devastatingly clear by a dance number from the forthcoming VistaVision feature, *White Christmas*. Medium shots and even some long shots on this huge scale show expressions as clearly as close-ups on the usual screen.

Too Good?

The depth of field is indeed an impressive feature of VistaVision, but the assertion that it adds to the realism of the picture is open to question. In nature the eye selects specific features of a scene and thus does its own range-finding. Here the entire field of vision has pinpoint sharpness, the eye being free to wander all over the screen.

As VistaVision can be presented on standard projection equipment I should not be surprised to find it superseding other methods. Of

Above : left, the VistaVision horizontal negative, two and a half times the size of the normal frame ; right, the standard release print. Below : the VistaVision camera, showing the position of the horizontal spools. VistaVision should be readily adaptable to 16mm.





Gerard Philipe dances till he drops for the sake of a drink. A typical scene from *The Proud Ones*, showing something of the skill lavished on a pointless story.

course, the large screen 1.33 : 1 ratio merely results in putting the audience closer to a normal screen, albeit with greatly improved picture quality. Yet the real cinema addict has known of this advantage for years, and has suffered headaches (and saved his money) in order to sit close enough to the screen to "lose himself" in the picture.

However, there is one obvious snag. We are told that "the finders on the VistaVision cameras carry a hairline framing marking in the aspect ratio of 1.66 : 1. There will also be a frame line marking for the 1.33 : 1 aspect ratio. The cameramen are instructed to compose for a loose (meaning adequate headroom) 1.66 : 1 picture. A picture composed in this way will play equally good at 1.85 : 1, it will play very satisfactorily at 2 : 1 and it can be played at the old standard of 1.33 : 1."

Big Opportunities

"Loose" pictures have obvious dangers. Are the days of the well-planned "tight" composition numbered? Are we to have backgrounds made unimportant to allow the picture to be sliced down to the exhibitor's requirements?

Compositions on a sliding scale, no close-ups, restricted cutting—this sounds like the death-knell of all that is best in the cinema. But prophecies are apt to appear foolish after a few imaginative directors have been at work. Certainly VistaVision seems to be the answer to the spectacular film maker's prayer. (De Mille has already announced he will make *The Ten Commandments* using the new system). It is a good frame for those who need a large canvas. All that's needed now are some really big-hearted artists.

Apart from this big screen venture, it has been a lean month, but two films can be wholeheartedly recommended. *Executive Suite*, directed by Robert Wise, is the most intelligent

and absorbing drama since *Julius Caesar*, to which it bears a certain affinity. (It is worth noting that both films were produced by John Houseman).

This time the same theme—struggle for power—is the basis of a story of rival vice-presidents of a large furniture company. On the sudden death of the corporation's president, five men become eligible for the vacancy. There is no physical violence in the intrigue which follows, yet the film remains compelling throughout.

Expert Polish

Few films merit nearly two hours' running time, but thanks to its expert technique, *Executive Suite* does not seem overlong. Script, direction and camera work are equally polished, and remarkably accomplished performances are given by the ten stars, William Holden, June Allyson, Barbara Stanwyck, Frederic March (an outstanding study), Walter Pidgeon, Shelley Winters, Paul Douglas, Louis Calhern, Dean Jagger and Nina Foch, though unfortunately Barbara Stanwyck's portrayal of a neurotic shareholder suffers from over-familiarity.

The editing looks deceptively straightforward, but it deserves special attention. Notice particularly the linking shots—the amateur's usual bugbear. Here sequences are dovetailed neatly with apparent ease. None of the continuity devices sticks in the memory as being ingenious, simply because they are all so natural. But link shots which are natural and economic are always the result of very careful forethought.



Every shot in *Gate of Hell* shows the attention to composition and painstaking detail of this still of Machiko Kyo. Notice the transparent veil in the foreground on the left, a device used throughout the film to add depth and softness to the images.

The opening sequence of *Executive Suite* uses the subjective camera technique, the camera taking the place of one of the characters. Here everything is seen through the eyes of the president. Lift doors shut and open before the lens as he rides down to the ground floor, and hands reach out to shake his own, below the frame line. This is not a new idea, of course. Robert Montgomery used it throughout the whole of *Lady in the Lake*.

Worth Trying

But the result remains artificial, partly because of the screen borders, partly because of the lack of a third dimension. Perhaps some of the new techniques would help this first-person viewpoint idea. It would certainly be worth trying. Meanwhile it only lasts for a few minutes in *Executive Suite*, certainly not enough to mar an excitingly adult film.

Until a few days ago I considered Renoir's *The Golden Coach* the loveliest colour film I had seen. But *Gate of Hell*, the first colour picture to come from Japan, is an even more beautiful production. Every shot has been composed with enchanting artistry. Glowing silks, pastel veils, delicately tinted curtains and bold black foregrounds are used with striking effect.

Machiko Kyo, who played the young wife in *Rashomon*, has a rather similar part in this story of a nobleman's disastrous love for a married woman in twelfth-century Japan. Once again the acting of the whole cast seems flawless to Western eyes, despite the strangeness of gesture and tongue. We may not be qualified to judge the value and significance of a film made by people whose history and culture is so alien to our own, but we can at least delight in its more obvious merits.

Exquisite

Although the fluid camera movement and cutting of *Rashomon* and the excitement of *Tora-No-O* are almost completely absent in *Gate of Hell*, it still remains absorbing. True, the tempo is slow, but this seems to be a hallmark of the Japanese cinema. (I have never quite forgotten—or forgiven—*Madam O'Hara* a Japanese film never publicly shown here, doubtless for the very good reason that it was insufferably long-winded).

Teinosuke Kinugasa, who wrote and directed *Gate of Hell*, seems to have been content to tell his story in a straightforward series of exquisite images, which time and time again recall the delicacy of Oriental prints. Meanwhile the music squeals and jangles, the characters grunt and gurgle, and I for one sit in the stalls enraptured. And as for the Eastmancolor—but this is where I came in.

Several films recently have come in for considerable praise for establishing atmosphere. *Act of Love*, for instance, showed all the directorial skill of Anatole Litvak in its picture of post-war Paris, but endeavoured to struggle along without sufficient plot to arouse interest.

Now we have *The Proud Ones*, a French film which plumbs new depths.

Atmosphere is undeniably achieved. If you care to see the physical effects of a meningitis epidemic in a slum village in Mexico, your curiosity will be amply satisfied. But this setting for the old story (this time with Sartre's name attached) of the good woman's love for an apparently irrevocable drunkard is merely an excuse to show squalor in nauseating detail.

However, the film has a most imaginative soundtrack. Mexico during the Easter celebrations apparently echoes to jazz music, sudden



Hollywood's expertness in camerawork and lighting is something we tend to take for granted. But examine these shots of Paul Douglas, Shelley Winters and Louis Calhern in *Executive Suite*. How often do we amateurs attempt such telling set-ups?

explosions and weird howls. Appropriately, a long maniacal wail opens and closes the film. What a pity the talents of the director, Yves Allegret, and the stars, Gerard Philipe and Michele Morgan, both of whom give first class performances, should be so ill-used!

France's last Mexican excursion, *The Wages of Fear*, looks almost clean and wholesome compared to *The Proud Ones*. Incidentally, can anyone suggest one good reason why the whole of the most exciting sequence in *The Wages of Fear* should have been cut from the film before it was generally released?

There could not have been any censorship objections, and as the programme was made up by a supporting feature and a short it could not have been a question of running time. Strange are the ways of distributors!

Visitors' Evening

By D. LEGGETT



Perhaps at some time or another your group has had visitors—not members of another cine club, but visitors from that section of the human race that regards amateur movie men as cranks or Rothschilds. We were shooting when they came to us. We would have been shooting when they left but we ran out of ammunition. A crucial scene was on the floor when they arrived. The film was intended as the best of the Ten Best for that year, but Continuity was not satisfied with the set and the camera had not rolled.

The first we knew of them was when the familiar face of our landlord appeared at the studio (basement) door, and asked if we minded if some friends of his watched us at work.

"No," we said, for obvious reasons.

"Good," he said, and left us. In trooped six people who were clearly not of the faith.

Now six may not seem a large number, but our studio is barely long enough for a decent mid shot, and hardly wide enough for two actors to move without barking their knuckles on the wall. The height did not matter, except to the tall visitor who twice singed his head on our two "K" spot. However, we started work.

"Would you people mind standing in that far corner, please?" said our Director. They trooped across and stood in a serried row. They looked hopeful.

"But that's the camera position," said the operator. "You'd better go to the other corner." They trooped across and stood in a serried row, still looking hopeful.

"If you're going to stand there," said Assistant Lights, "you'd better look out." He sounded belligerent, and the visitors looked questioning. "Yes," he said, and he sounded

happier, "there's a bare connection on our power line in that corner. You might get a nasty shock."

The visitors now looked apprehensive. Indeed, one younger lady was looking as though mice were present. "In that case," we said, "perhaps you would like to use the other corner, after all." The visitors did not quite run.

"Now let's get on," said our Director.

"Continuity, can we shoot?"

"I'm happy."

"Lights?"

"Suits me."

"Camera?" There was no reply. "Where's Ted?" said our Director, but no one could see the cameraman anywhere. "Ted?" we called, and he replied from deep among the visitors. He had been lying flat on his stomach for a view of the set, when they had stampeded into his corner. Fortunately, the camera was unharmed. Finally they were settled by standing three hard up against the walls of the studio, three each side. We crowded into the corner with the live connection, and the Director began a final run through.

"Now, Agnes," he called, "we rehearsed this scene before. We just want a camera rehearsal for Ted. Put everything into it. All set?"

"I think so."

"Right! Rehearsal only, Ted. Action!"

Agnes played her scene with George, the leading man. "That's all right," said our Director. We breathed a sigh of relief. "Except that you were wearing a mask. Where's your expression, dear?"

"What expression?"

"The expression of a human caught in a whirlpool of emotion. Emote, dear! Emote!"

"What! In front of them?" Agnes sounded unhappy.

The visitors flattened themselves even closer to the walls. They seemed uncomfortable, until Ted terminated the pause with "You'll have to move those cables." It was then that several people "emoted" in rapid succession. Assistant Lights moved a cable closer to the wall. A loop of it dropped on the younger lady visitor's foot. She appeared to think it was a live snake, for she screamed and kicked violently. This jerked at the two "K" spot perched on high. Slowly the heavy light and its thin tubular stand began to topple toward Agnes. She screamed. George rushed to catch it. We yelled "Timber!" or shut our eyes. Then the light slowly toppled back. It had a weighted base. There was silence.

Presently our Director spoke. "I think you have seen all we have to offer, ladies and gentlemen," he said. "We shall be breaking down in a moment—packing up, that is; so if you wouldn't mind..."

"But we haven't seen any shooting yet," said the visitors.

"Quite!" said our Director, and the visitors left. The amazing thing is that two of them have since joined the club. They must be as mad as we are.

Next month: *Public Show.*

Tape Recording Out of Doors

The new portable Reporter tape recorder opens up new horizons to the amateur cine worker

And now a portable tape recorder which you can take out with you on location for recording natural sounds instead of having to rely on effects records. We had great fun in recording, among other things, the roar of an express from its approach in the distance to its thunder past our set-up—and results on playback were most effective. Of course, we *could* have used an effects record, but this would not have given us the matching to the visuals that we were able to secure with on the spot recording. And, of course, there are countless other subjects waiting. A recording of bird songs, for example, was unexpectedly satisfying.

The portable tape recorder we tested was one of five marketed by Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes, covering tape speeds from 3½ in. to 15 in. per sec. and with or without a built-in playback loudspeaker. They are primarily intended for the recording of speech but, as already indicated, they are very useful for collecting sound effects and even music.

Special Motor

The model we used for test was the "Reporter de Luxe" with a tape speed of 7½ in. per sec. and built-in loudspeaker. A three valve recording/playback amplifier is powered from two B.101 67½ volt H.T. batteries (average life 100 hours) and two U.2 1½ volt L.T. batteries (average life 10 hours).

The tape is driven by a large diameter capstan mounted directly on the drive shaft of a special double spring gramophone type clockwork motor, which at one winding will drive the tape for 8 minutes. As the recorded tape is normally intended to be replayed on a mains tape recorder, there is no built-in rewind drive, but a small crank handle is supplied which fits over the supply spool for occasions when it is desired to check that recording is proceeding correctly.

The instrument is contained in a case 14 in. x 7 in. x 6½ in. neatly covered in blue leatherette and with plated fittings. There is a carrying handle at the top, but a strap is also provided so that the recorder can be slung from the shoulder. The weight is only 12½ lb., so no undue effort is required in transport.

Window Check

Two "fall-away" compartments are provided at each end of the case to hold the hand crystal microphone, the winding handle, the rewind crank and the shoulder strap which are all part of the normal equipment and also three spare spools of tape. A slight point of criticism is raised here: we feel that it would have been desirable to hinge these compartments at the



bottom instead of having them completely detachable. It would then be much easier to stow the microphone when the Reporter is stood on a flat surface or carried.

A shallow lid covers the recording head, capstan, supply and take-up reels. Tape threading is very easy and you can check from a transparent window in the lid that the reels are turning. They carry 600ft. of tape for 15 minutes of recording. The recording head records full track so that the tape may be played back on half-track machines either to American or German standards. No erase head is provided owing to the limitations of battery supplies; it is usual to employ tape previously erased on a mains machine. A permanent magnet can be used for erasing if desired, the recording bias removing most of the hiss produced by this method. Half track heads are available to order.

No Volume Control

Operation is very simple, control being by a single 3-position knob labelled OFF - PLAYBACK - RECORD. A brake is automatically applied in the OFF position to both capstan and supply reel. No volume control is provided, since it has been found possible, in conjunction with the smooth overloading and low noise properties of tape recording, to accommodate a range of volume from normal speech close to the microphone to distant sound effects. A volume indicator is, for the same reason, superfluous.

The microphone is a modern diaphragm type crystal which gives very pleasing, smooth speech and has a tonal balance which compares favourably with real high fidelity types. The average

voltage input required by the amplifier for full volume recordings is approximately 1-2 millivolts, although up to 10mv. can be accommodated without noticeable distortion. A low impedance input for moving coil microphones is available to special order.

Flutter Tests

A second socket, labelled PHONES, is available for monitoring on recording, or for playback into high impedance phones or an amplifier. In the "de Luxe" model, the built-in loudspeaker works only on playback, while there is a third jack-socket for a 3 ohm external loudspeaker.

Recordings on the tape are substantially flat between 30 and 8,000 c.p.s. But the playback frequency response is not level since there is no playback tone correction. Tapes are normally played back on mains operated equipment when, with the usual playback compensation, high quality level response results.

A check of the constancy of tape speed and of the absence of wow and flutter was made by recording a 1,000 c.p.s. test tone. On playback, flutter was only just audible, but was not discernible in later tests on music. Over an 8 minute run the 1,000 c.p.s. tone dropped to 950, which is less than a semi-tone and quite acceptable especially as it is possible, where

music is concerned, to keep the Reporter wound while running.

For speed adjustment of the capstan, a 50 c.p.s. stroboscope disc is provided with all models. The clockwork motor is controlled by a centrifugal governor with a wide range of adjustment, but is preset at the factory to the appropriate standard speed. Individual adjustment may be made to match a mains tape recorder slightly off speed.

Fresh Fields

The Reporter de Luxe performed very well on test, and will certainly be of great interest for cine work. It is doubtful, however, if the built-in loudspeaker is of real use for cine. The uncorrected playback response, combined with small loudspeaker makes it difficult to judge quality and the rewinding by hand crank being rather tedious, one tends to avoid playback checks on location, especially if time is short. Recordings may still be monitored and checked on phones which, excluding external noises, probably provide the better method. Even so, the Reporter opens up an entrancing field in amateur movie-making and will undoubtedly greatly widen the amateur's existing range.

Price of the standard model is £55; de luxe model, with loudspeaker, £59.

New Editor Has Neat Design

The latest in the line of Haynor editors is a relatively simple but neatly designed animated viewer which throws a picture by rear projection on to its built-in 2 x 1½ in. ground glass screen. The image is produced from the continuously moving film by the usual method of a hexagonal prism above the film rotating in synchronism with the film frames. The refraction of light in the moving prism exactly compensates for film travel, and keeps the picture still on the screen. As the hexagonal block has all six sides transparent, each successive picture merges into the next, there being no dark period between each frame.

The editor is well made, the body being a sturdy die casting upon which all the components are mounted. The lens holder and rear cover are also die castings. The film path is quite simple: one roller at each side of the aperture plate, and a third roller to keep the film wrapped around the sprocket. The film path is fully exposed, and threading and unthreading is quick and easy.

The editor must be mounted between the arms of a rewriter, the film path being carefully aligned with the reels. Screw holes are provided in the base for it to be screwed to the baseboard of the rewriter. As with other animated viewers, a simple 1:1 non-gearred rewriter gives smooth film travel at the normal speed of 16 f.p.s. A high geared rewriter tends to be jerky if used at this relatively slow rewinding speed.

Just a little tension is necessary on the feed



spool to keep the film properly on the teeth of the sprocket of the viewer. Short lengths can be pulled through if the film is kept in line with the rollers, and the tension maintained on the feed side to keep the film on the sprocket teeth.

The base of the Haynorette contains a step-down transformer, complete with its own 1 amp. fuses of the usual cartridge type. The transformer can be used on 200 to 250 volts, alternating current only; the viewer cannot be used on D.C. mains. The transformer feeds a 6v. 6w. S.B.C. based bulb of the car sidelight type. The lamp is considerably overrun for more light—on

our 230 volt mains, the voltage across the lamp was $8\frac{1}{2}$ volts.

A correctly orientated picture is obtained by winding the film from left to right, emulsion side up (normal reversal film). The film does not pass through a gate as such; it is simply drawn between the two flanged rollers over the aperture plate. So any selected frame can readily be cut, or marked with a wax pencil.

Minimising Wear

The focusing mount is locked off with a small knurled screw, the lens being correctly set to focus the film being wound through. There is a very slight shift in focus when the film is static, no doubt because it is allowed to lie somewhat slack between the rewinds. When in motion it is taut and appears to rise very slightly above the aperture plate. This should particularly minimise any chances of film wear, even on the edges, because the film will not be dragged over the aperture plate. Should it ever be necessary to refocus, it is perfectly simple to slacken the lock screw and revolve the helical focusing mount.

There are only two shafts in the editor, one carrying the sprocket and the other the rotating hexagonal block. The two shafts are geared together in such a way that for each frame of film going over the sprocket, the hexagon moves on to the next "face". In the earlier models, the gearing on the two shafts was readily adjustable for meshing, and this provided the racking adjustment. In this viewer, the racking has been correctly set in assembly, and is locked at the correct setting.

The picture on the rear projection screen appears quite bright, even in a normally lit

room, and is quite large enough to show the detail on the film. It is adequately sharp and steady, and the compact arrangement of the built-in screen is extremely neat. The die castings are nicely finished in a gold hammer tone finish enamel, and the film handling parts are plated and polished. This well designed editor is available in 8mm., 9.5mm., and 16mm. sizes, price £12 17s. 6d.

USEFUL ACCESSORIES

In addition to their de-luxe splicer (reviewed in *Odd Shots*, page 368), Robert Rigby Ltd., have the following interesting items to offer:

Junior Trolley Stand. This collapsible metal projector stand is 4ft. 3in. high with a top platform measuring 21in. by 30in. Free running ball bearing castors are fitted, together with locking feet which can be adjusted separately to compensate for an uneven surface. Rigidity is obviously the one really important feature and, under test, the stand proved completely stable. This may in some measure be due to its weight which is not inconsiderable but the stand is easily folded flat and can be moved from room to room on its wheels. Price £9 9s.

Premier Rewinders. The columns of cast iron finished in grey enamel support smooth running totally enclosed heavy duty gears. Ratio of gearing is 3:1, and the re-winder will handle up to 14in. diameter spools of 2,000ft. capacity. Two models are available, the Standard taking 8mm. and 16mm. and the Universal handling 16/9.5/8mm. Prices: with both ends geared, Standard £5 5s. Universal £6 10s. With one geared and one auxiliary end £4 4s. and £4 19s. respectively.

FUN AND GAMES DEPARTMENT

"Howard Hawks is carrying stones to the Pyramids. The director of Warner Bros. CinemaScope spectacle *Land of the Pharaohs* has ordered four giant fibre-glass 'stones' to be sent to Cairo immediately. When they get there they will be carried to the top of a Pyramid and thrown down on Jack Hawkins and a hundred extras." (*Warner Bros. publicity.*)

STUMPED AT LAST!

"The usual adjectives to describe colour photography such as gorgeous - breathtaking - magnificent, do not fill the bill as far as United Artists' new Pathecolour swashbuckler, *Crossed Swords*, starring Errol Flynn and Gina Lollobrigida

Parting Shots

is concerned." (*United Artists' publicity.*)

HAIL, THE SADISTIC HERO COMES...

"Many people looked upon *From Here to Eternity* as a welcome sign... that Americans were changing from sentimental musicals or romanticised historical subjects to hard realism and violence." (*Home Movies.*)

AND AS FOR THE CRITICS...

"Richard Widmark, who chilled audiences with moronic performances in..." (*20th-Century publicity.*)

PUBLICITY CORN!

"The Columbia Pictures

company shooting the Technicolor drama *Joseph and his Brethren* in Luxor, Egypt, sent word to producer Jerry Wald that it had been given some of the very grain stored by Joseph for the famine that was to follow his arrival in Egypt after the seven fat years." (*Columbia publicity.*)

IN A NUTSHELL

"After playing Chief Inspector Hubbard in the Broadway stage version of *Dial M for Murder*... John Williams went to the Warner studio, Hollywood, to play the same part in the film. Before the cameras turned, Alfred Hitchcock took him aside to explain the difference between acting for live theatre and screen. 'Just go on doing what you did on the stage,' he said, 'only less'." (*Warner Bros. publicity.*)

British Films Chosen

for Continental Contests

The British Amateur Cinematographers' Central Council, the organisation to which the leading amateur cine groups holding competitions belong, have selected the four films which are to represent this country in the 16th UNICA international amateur film competition to be held at Lisbon in August. The choice has fallen on two films from the Ten Best and two submitted by the Scottish Film Council.

What are the prospects of the British entry repeating last year's success? Not very bright. *Floral Fantasy*, by the same skilful hand which produced the major UNICA prizewinner of 1953, *The History of Walton*, exhibits the imagination and dexterity of its predecessor, but in the one case the theme is factual and in the other it is abstract. And it is always hazardous to predict the reception of a "mood" picture which departs from the familiar. However, on the Continent they incline to favour such films more than we do (the "genre" classification in the UNICA competitions finds no counterpart in British contests), although it must be admitted that UNICA genre is usually synonymous with gloom.

Lengthy

The theme of *While the Earth Remaineth* should hold interest for the fifteen or so countries represented in the competition, for it has a universal application, but when some sixty films have to be screened, its length may be to its disadvantage, for the entire footage is devoted to the inexorable working out of a single idea, with no byplay or subplot to provide relief or diversion.

The shining virtue of Fidelity Film Unit's *The Will to Live* (1,000ft., 16mm., s.o.f., colour)

is its utter sincerity, but it is clearly designed for the less sophisticated type of audience (the Unit's films are made for use in the service of the Church) for whom problems of moral conduct are resolved in terms of uncompromising black and white, and who are not over-much concerned with the subtleties of film idiom.

Other audiences might perhaps find some of its simple statements of fact a little embarrassing. For example, the scene in which the disappointed suitor stalks a few yards behind the young couple with a shot gun, while they are sublimely unaware of his presence, comes perilously near to provoking laughter. The leading players plainly have a sense of dedication and that has to serve for

acting ability. But the judges will certainly be impressed by the admirable split screen shots (some of them a triple split).

The Approach to Api by J. B. Tyson (350ft., 16mm., colour) has the advantage of an unusual location. Moreover, it has a certain topical interest, for films of mountain expeditions have been very much in the news during the past year. Whether the rather loose construction of the production will prove acceptable remains to be seen, but its pleasant colour will doubtless be admired.

This year each competing country has been invited to send a youth instructional film to UNICA, not for competition purposes, but to make up a programme demonstrating representative national amateur work in this field. The British Film Institute's submission, *Netball* (400ft., 16mm., s.o.f.), made by Look & Listen Film Unit, has been selected to represent British work in the instructional field, and its lucid, straightforward approach should make the choice a popular one.

Amateur Film Conventions

AUSTRALIA

"I am certain that no other amateur cine federation in the whole wide world could match such enthusiasm," said President A. T. Bartlett, addressing delegates to the Federation of Australian Amateur Cine Societies' second annual convention at Brisbane. And he's surely right! One delegate flew 3,000 miles to be present, two others and a visitor journeyed 1,200 miles, and eight members from three societies made a 1,000 mile trip. The President himself is a champion globe-trotter, most successfully acting as ambassador for Australian amateur films on his world tour last year.

F.A.A.C.S. were able to report steady progress. They have tightened up competition rules, "ensuring that the anomalies of the last Commonwealth film competition, whereby some very suspect amateurs won prizes, will not be repeated,"

furnished up judging sheets, with the advice of a professor of Sydney University, eliminated clashing of competition dates, and generally provided Australia with a representative national body.

Evidence of their success in the last mentioned is the fact that they were approached by the Australian Road Safety Council to organise a national road safety film competition for prizes put up by the Commonwealth Government. All State road safety councils have been instructed to co-operate with the cine societies, and the Ford Motor Company have requested all their distributors to place vehicles and equipment at the service of members making such films.

From the dinner of welcome ("ease take-up belt, watch footage indicator, sound effects: tea, coffee") to tea for the ladies given by Mrs. Bartlett on the

fifth, and final day, the convention went with a swing, light-hearted social activities being happily spliced with technical sessions on stereo projection, sound recording methods and tape synchronisation.

HOLLAND

At the annual Dutch Nova congress, held at Hilversum, the trade vied with amateur movie-makers in putting on a very good show—but at first not very successfully, exhibitors complaining that the meetings and excursions took delegates away from the stands. A loosening of the schedule, however, made everyone happy. None of the equipment was for sale, visitors being advised to consult their local dealers.

Chairman Van Eldik reported on Nova's success in linking the clubs and advocated decentralisation of control rather than having operations conducted from one exclusive source. In common with every other national amateur cine organisation, they are seeking ways of arranging free movement of amateur films abroad, but Customs difficulties are still "unbelievably burdensome." Six months were spent in haggling over some films sent to France.

Commenting on Nova's film competition, one speaker made a familiar point: he pleaded for more attention to be given to the thought behind the picture. It is possible that one of the films shown at the Congress, a documentary, *Hennep* (Hemp) may be seen on Dutch TV.

FRANCE

The seventh International Amateur Film Festival, to be held at the Palais des Festivals at Cannes from 4th to 14th Sept., is open to all entrants. Films do not have to be submitted by national organisations. Visitors to the Festival are allowed 30% tariff reduction by local hotel keepers. Details can be obtained from the Secretary, M. Roger Chaynes, 20 Boulevard de Lorraine, Cannes (A.-M.).

Experimental Work

shares honours with famous films

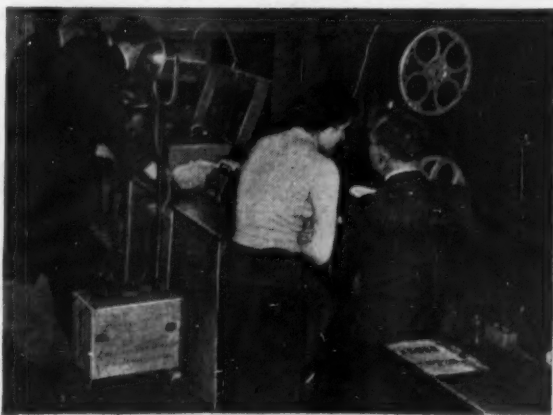
The British Film Institute has issued a revised edition of its Distribution Catalogue (2s. 6d.) several sections of which are of particular interest to the amateur. The list of some twenty amateur films is obviously of direct interest. These films, including such well known titles as *Marionettes*, *Sestrieres 1949*, *Paper Boat*, *Neighbourhood 15* and *Paris, Joli Souvenir* represent what the Institute hopes will be a continuing collection—a collection which it is forming as part of its plan to encourage the serious amateur. "Serious," it is pointed out, applies to the film-maker's intention and not to his subject; "the amateur cinematographer who makes home movies for domestic enjoyment is already well catered for."

Many of these films, however, differ from the general run only by being very much better produced than the average amateur movie. *Paper Boat*, for example, is a familiar tale in the *Brief Encounter* genre, *Black Legend*, a costume piece. Not all of their producers can be

accurately described as being of "that smaller group . . . who . . . interested in the use of the film as an artistic medium, find themselves often in a difficult, and always in an isolated position."

Those who are truly isolated from the mainstream are, in fact, channelled into it by the Institute. Films which contribute to the history and art of the cinema are grouped according to their year of production, from 1895 up to the present day; and, significantly, sharing honours with Lumiere, Chaplin *The Italian Straw Hat*, *Potemkin* and extracts from *Red Shoes* and *Oliver Twist* are experimental films which can truly be described as amateur, and utility amateur films such as *The Singing Street*.

Few of these amateur films exhibit the technical enterprise and polish which characterises those in the amateur section proper; indeed, most club critics would probably savage them for their deficiencies in this direction—yet the Institute regards them as being milestones in film art. Since the



The best films deserve the best projection. Members of Erimus Research Group try to ensure that they get it. The spotlight is a converted aircraft landing light fed from a transformer in the base.

British Film Institute is, in effect, the arbiter and depository of film, largely financed from public funds, surely it is commonsense to examine their selections with a very real desire to understand them, rather than write them off as obscure and imperfectly made.

There is, of course, much to be said for both points of view. If some of us err in being too much pre-occupied with technique, others are perhaps also at fault in esteeming the intention above all and being too ready to excuse inadequate execution for the sake of it. But the biggest error is flatly to deny that the other fellow has any case at all.

Bewildering

Even so, it would be unwise for the traveller in the sinister land of *avant garde* to start off with such bewildering productions as *Petrified Dog* or *An Andalusian Dog*. Better by far to begin with films like Frank Stauffacher's *Sausalito*, in which camera and sound are used to catch the atmosphere of a small American seaside resort. The B.F.I. will always advise on choice of programme. (All films are 16mm., sound and silent).

Perhaps the freshest amateur films in the catalogue are those made by school children. If the ingredients are all too familiar—murder at a country house, mysterious female spies, unmasking of the crooked master, lost necklaces, the pangs of conscience—their very corniness is a delight. And it is a chastening thought that these themes are not exclusive to thirteen-year-olds.

Nat, Big Brother for Pat

Welcome to a new camera: the Pathe National II. Main features of this 9.5mm. instrument are: f/1.9 lens, interchangeable lens mount, parallax correction, four speeds, single picture release and light weight. It takes the standard H charger and costs £55 13s. We hope



Leicester and Leicestershire C.C. members are also determined that a good programme should be well presented. At their presentation of the 1952 Ten Best, the projectionists and sound operators kept in contact with the back-stage members controlling the coloured footlights by telephone.

to publish a full test report of this, and of the new Pathe Uniter splicer, in an early issue.

Coincident with the arrival of the National II, Patheoscope, stronghold of the baby-on-the-lawn picture (and we don't mean this unkindly: the amateur film movement is built on the family film) is now coming out in favour of the film-with-a-purpose. The

editorial of the current issue of the *Monthly* stresses that "the film can have a greater and more definite underlying purpose" than the provision of entertainment and relaxation; and recent issues have contained recondite "Advanced Notes," the latest on chromatic mime.

Copyright

The summer issue of the *I.A.C. News* contains a very helpful article on copyright and the amateur, detailing the steps the amateur who uses recorded music must take and explaining the Institute's scheme under which certain manufacturers and copyright holders have agreed to reduce their fees to members.

Other features of the *News* includes comments on A.C.L., F.C.S. and Scottish prize-winning films, "The Amateur and the Professional Film," the author of which affirms that

very few amateurs seem to frequent the professional cinema, except for such outstanding items as the Everest film and 3-D, and an announcement regarding a script competition for an instructional film (which the Institute hopes to make) on the operation and simple maintenance of a cine camera. Members are also invited to help in the production of a separate deck for use with striped film.

Camping

And now an "international cine camping festival." The Italian magazine, *Aria Aperta*, announces a competition for films illustrating life in tent or caravan. 35mm. and 16mm. each has its own class, and there is a third class for 8mm. and 9.5mm. The prizewinning films will be shown at the festival in Piedmont next year.

The three best 35mm. films are promised a release in Italian cinemas, while the prizewinning substandard films will be distributed in Italy and abroad, subject to the producers' agreement. There will be a special prize for the film of any gauge which receives most votes from campers attending the festival. Details are obtainable from *Aria Aperta*, via Durini 27, Milan, Italy.

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News from the Societies

Reports received by the 18th of each month will appear in the following issue.
Club stills are always welcome. (Address on page 335.)

Spotlight

Liverpool Amateur Photographic Association Cine Group recently organised a meeting with eighteen other clubs from the North-West. It followed the successful conference of regional clubs held at Stoke-on-Trent, and among the matters discussed were problems of club finance, studios and sets, membership, programme organisation, film hire, courses in cine work, club competitions, scripts, and the possible establishment of a panel of judges. The first conference clearly indicated that the experience of individual clubs in these matters could be turned to the advantage of all, and the question of federating all nineteen clubs to the F.C.S. was considered.

Meanwhile the Group are to organise week-end courses in cinematography at Burton Manor in the Wirral, similar to those held at Great Missenden and elsewhere. Such courses have, in fact, been held at Burton Manor every year, but attendance has been poor. There appeared to have been no press publicity or notices of any kind, and the existing local cine societies, at least three of whom show the Ten Best on several evenings each year, as well as other amateur films, seemed to have been unknown.

So now, although Burton Manor will hold the course, the Group will organise it. The next week-end session takes place early in November; enquiries to the Group's Hon. Sec.

One member's efforts in 8mm. Kodachrome over several years were screened at a recent film appreciation evening to demonstrate the improvement in technique provided by experience. The F.C.S.'s "Let's Make a Film" programme has been shown and the club's entry for this competition completed. Two No. 1 photo-floods were used as the main light, one No. 1 as a balancing side-light, one overhead No. 1 and a No. 1 in a 250 watt spotlight for modelling. (The latter gave a better illumination than the normal 250 watt spot lamp.)

This set-up gave ample light as most of the shots were big close-ups, and exposure was between f/2.8 and f/4 with Super X. A Bolex H.16 with lin. f/1.9 Genever and 4in. f/3.8 Schneider Xenon was used, with an f/2.8 Ensign Autokinecam for covering shots. Each important scene was taken three times with the Bolex and covered once by the Ensign. (Hon. Sec., Miss W. D. Lusk, 34 Linnet Lane, Liverpool, 17).

On the Way

Crawley F.U. are about to start work on their second production. (Their first was the 1953 Ten Best winner, *Two Friends*). Most of the cast will again be drawn from Crawley Drama Group, and the film, an original comedy, is being written and

directed by the club's secretary, Mrs. R. Howe, 9 Holly Bush Road, Northgate, Crawley, Sussex.

Mid-Essex F.S. plan to start shooting a short 8mm. comedy very soon. It will consist wholly of exteriors, and well-known local beauty spots are to be featured as settings. One member hopes to make his own film showing the production being made, and prophesies that it will provoke more laughs than the comedy itself! Plans are also going ahead for a 16mm. s.o.f. production, which it is hoped to start during the autumn. An appreciation section will be formed if sufficient support is forthcoming. New members, with or without equipment, who are interested in any gauge will be welcomed, and should contact the Hon. Sec., D. W. Gravett, 24 Kilworth Ave., Shenfield, Essex.

In Production

Southall C.C. report that shooting on both their current productions is nearing completion. *The Thing* has been given the go-ahead signal now that the publishers of the song of that name have given permission for a parody to be used as the theme of the film. Members are also busy on a film about the activities of the local Community Centre, and shots of badminton, ballet and music groups have already been taken. All activities of the Centre will eventually be covered, and it is hoped to show the film early next year.

Tape recording has intrigued several members recently, and one is contemplating a s.o.f. documentary as his next venture. Another member gained second place in the Slough Arts Festival silent film section, enabling Southall to be runner-up in this contest for the second year in succession. The annual film competition has been arranged for September 28th to enable new members to compete. The Club is now firmly established in its new headquarters, which have been re-decorated by members. Anyone willing to assist in the making of scenery will be most welcome. (Hon. Publicity Officer, Mrs. J. Robinson, 29 Devon Way, Heston, Middx.)

Triad F.U. (Nottingham) are co-operating with Don Briggs Kinescope Service Ltd., the local cine dealer, in a 16mm. colour comedy thriller. *Spring Symphony*, an 8mm. colour film, is also in production. The Hon. Sec., Miss J. Booth, 4 Watcombe Circus, Sherwood, Nottingham, will be pleased to hear from other club secretaries interested in arranging an exchange of films. She will also be glad to supply full details of the club to any intending members.

Coventry F.P.U.'s 8mm. three-story production is now under way, with two of the three units involved shooting their respective sequences. Exteriors are being shot first so that interiors can be taken on wet days.

Accidental Death, one of the three stories, includes a character who requires the first "heavy" make-up this Unit have tackled. The club entered a float in the latest of the annual Coventry Carnival processions, showing a typical studio scene complete with equipment and technicians. (Hon. Sec., Mrs. D. Dawson, 99 Allesley Old Road, Coventry).

Centre F.U. (Richmond) are working on a new 16mm. fiction film written by the Secretary and provisionally called *T.D.E.* Scenes are being shot at 24 f.p.s. and music is to be added after the film's completion to save other clubs the headache of searching for suitable mood discs. Three small parts have still to be cast (two male, one female), and a second cameraman is also needed (16mm. equipment not essential). There are also vacancies for general members, who are assured that no gauge complex exists in this group. Meetings are held every Monday at 8 p.m., at Richmond Community Centre, and lone workers are invited to attend. Prospective members and visitors are asked to contact the Secretary, Miss Patricia Green, 42 Deanhill Court, East Sheen, S.W.14, in advance to ensure that the Unit will not be out filming somewhere. (Tel. Prospect 5920).

Kingsway Film Unit's current production, *Inner Circle*, has led to several odd incidents, not the least of which was provided by the Bailiff of the Royal Parks. In reply to an application for permission to shoot a short sequence in Grosvenor Square, he replied that while he was sure that there was "nothing objectionable in the film," he felt it was "unsuitable for a memorial garden." At present the director is in Paris, the composer of the incidental music in Egypt, and only the cameraman in London. However, two articles in *Lucifer*, *King's College Review*, indicate the thoroughness with which the film is being tackled. An introductory sequence for another experimental film, *The Broken Venus*, has recently been shot with the aid of improved lighting equipment, including universal-jointed fittings made to hang from a picture rail. Enquiries to J. M. Anderson, 14 Chase Hill, Enfield, Middx.

Sutton and District C.S.'s current 9.5mm. comedy, provisionally entitled *Cleaved Out*, is progressing satisfactorily. The clubroom was turned into a Woman's Institute recently for one sequence. The 8mm. group have filmed the miming of a Tudor Wedding at Cheam for their documentary. (The event was also covered by TV newscast cameramen). Week-end filming has been upset by bad weather, but steady progress on the documentary continues. Preparations for shooting the 16mm. drama, *Interlude*, are now complete, and shooting will commence very shortly. A cup for the best individual member's film is to be presented annually. (Hon. Sec., F. W. Platell, 69 Windsor Ave., Cheam, Surrey).

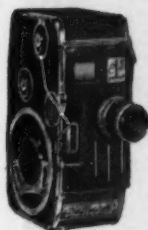
Pinner C.S. report that their film on flying saucers is still progressing. A new club headquarters at 8 Nower Hill, Pinner, is proving far more congenial than the previous bleak schoolroom, and the weekly meetings (Mondays, 8 p.m.) are more convivial as a result. Recently the Society had its first summer outing, and thanks to

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the fine weather every member was able to shoot 50ft. of film recording the event. Comparisons of the results are to be made shortly. A public showing of club films is to be given on 2nd Oct. (Secretary, Mrs. D. Titkin, 97 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner, Middx.).

Leicester and Leicestershire C.S.'s 8mm. group are working on a short film, *Nodding Acquaintance*, which features a nodding Buddha. The club's new Secretary, R. Hill, 43 New Way Road, Leicester, was the original Secretary in the early days of the Society. A new post—that of Publicity Officer—has been created in order to lift some of the burden from his shoulders.

Ray A.C.G. members have been interrupted in their work on their 16mm. production, *On the Carpet*, by holidays, but the Bolex H.16 is now at the ready once again. The shooting team has been re-arranged to give all members a chance to gain some knowledge of camerawork and lighting. One shot of a church door and a flight of steps is proving unexpectedly difficult, it being difficult to find a suitable location. Work on a projection booth is almost finished, and two shows have been given to members and friends. (Hon. Sec., R. A. Martin, 25 St. George's Ave., Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire.)

Berkhamsted A.C.C., who recently celebrated their first anniversary, are engaged on a film about the formation and life of a club in the nearby new town of Hemel Hempstead. It is hoped to finish it by the end of the year. The group's first film, *Coronation Day in Berkhamsted* has been well received locally. Throughout the past winter, monthly club evenings were held including film shows and lectures by the Chairman. New members are always welcome and can obtain details of membership from the Secretary, Miss B. M. Nethercot, 46 Meadow Road, Berkhamsted.

Tower A.C.P.U. are working on *Your Opportunity*, a 9.5mm. production telling the inside story of club life at Chelsea Community Centre. The title of the current film, *Le Art de la Louvre*, sounds ambitious—if a little ungrammatical. It is described as a comedy-thriller, and Valerie Williams, who appeared in *Life with the Lyons*, plays the lead. New members are welcome, and should write to M. E. Goodridge, 32 Fernshaw Road, S.W.10.

Omega F.P.U. are hoping to complete *What Price Freedom?*, their latest production, by the end of July, though difficulties in adding sound-on-tape are anticipated. The film concerns three youths who escape from an approved school, and follows the adventures of each. Two of the youths are played by the scriptwriter and assistant cameraman. Anyone interested in the Unit's work is invited to contact Geoffrey Cook, 50 Green Lane, Halton, Leeds.

Enfield C.C. have experience make-up difficulties during the production of their current 9.5mm. drama, *Balance Disturbed*. Work on the Club cinema is progressing satisfactorily, and members anticipate its completion within a few months. Designed to accommodate 30, it is to be decorated in contemporary style, with dark green as the principal colour. Though there were several committee changes at the recent A.G.M., John

Surrey, 5 Conical Corner, Chase Side, Enfield, Middx., is still Hon. Sec., and invites new members (any gauge, with or without equipment) to contact him.

Barnsley A.C.C., now six months old, are busy on two current productions. The 16mm. group are engaged on *Our Town*, a colour film of Barnsley and its people, while the 9.5mm. enthusiasts are shooting *Traditional Disaster*, a monochrome fiction film. Members are beginning to worry about their entries for the club competition (closing date 31st Oct.). Meetings are held every Monday at 7.30 p.m. in the Conservative Offices, Pitt Street, Barnsley.

Notes and News

Croydon C.C. hope to open an associate membership section. Full details have not yet been decided, but benefits will include admission to Club screenings and a regular news letter on members' activities. Plans for a portable proscenium are well under way. A 6ft. screen will be housed in a wooden framework covered with corrugated cardboard. Scriptwriter shortage still limits Club production, and members would be glad to hear from any local enthusiast with ideas suitable for filming. The IAC 1953



This prizewinner wasn't really trying to find his cup in the distinguished visitor's sleeve—it was just unintentional camera trickery at Rochdale and District C.S.'s annual open evening. The three cup winners for the best documentary, travel and personal films were (left to right) D. S. Woolfenden, C. A. Heap, and W. E. Foreman. All three of the winning entries were in colour.

and new members, with or without equipment, are assured of a warm welcome.

Work Completed

Kingston and District C.C. recently saw a 20-minute film on hairdressing called *Cutting for Style*, which was made by Club members at the request of the Hairdressers' Guild. John Daborn spoke on titling problems and demonstrated some of his own methods at another recent meeting, and to permit of all the questions his lecture provoked being answered another meeting was devoted to the same subject. The last summer meeting was an 8mm. film show. (Hon. Sec., Miss Margaret E. Turner, 8 Meadowside, Walton-on-Thames.)

Boilingbroke (Clapham) C.C. report that *Lucky Strike*, the 9.5mm. group's first production, is complete, and a public showing is now being arranged. Very few retakes were needed. Night exteriors, silhouette shots and animation work are involved in the new 8mm. film, which is being made in collaboration with Film Sextet, a neighbouring club.

Hounslow P.S. (Cine Section) have recently completed two films, *Too Many Cooks* and *When In Rome*. Although there are no meetings in August, members' cameras will still be turning in preparation for the annual competition. Several new members have joined the group, and a full programme has been prepared for the winter season. (Secretary, N. D. Bailey, 56 Warren Road, Whitton, Middx.).

prizewinners recently provided members with an entertaining and instructive evening. Members and guests will visit Chessington Zoo on 25th July, and are hoping that the weather will allow them plenty of shooting time. Enquiries about the Club are welcomed, and should be addressed to the Hon. Sec., R. G. Booker, 25 Lancing Road, West Croydon, Surrey.

Belfast Y.M.C.A. C.S. members experienced fine weather during their annual car trip to the Mourne country, and several records of the excursion were made. A short comedy was also shot during the day on both 8mm. and 16mm.

The Crest Film Group (Bedford) had visitors from as far afield as Huntingdon and Rushden for their presentation of the 1953 Ten Best. While the *Earth Remains* was unanimously considered the best film, although its length was criticised. Scripting and shooting of further items for the Group's local news magazine film has been going ahead, and production has started on a short comedy. A documentary about notable places in Bedford is also being considered, though it is agreed that a definite theme will be needed to prevent it falling into the "picture postcard" category. After some members' experiences with the s.o.f. production *River Highway*, sound-on-tape is being advocated for future group films. The expense involved in s.o.f. recording is not considered worthwhile. (Hon. Sec., S. H. Draper, 27b Pemberley Avenue, Bedford).

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Rookery Farm F.U. recently filmed a procession in London in what they describe as "typical filming weather." Their report continues: "The assistant cameraman's souster served to keep the camera dry during non-filming periods! The tripod was abandoned during some of the shots in order to secure a variety of camera angles with the least possible delay. Several close-ups of 'characters' in the crowd were taken and proved very useful during editing. A mounted police officer, whose arrival on the scene obstructed the field of view was 'moved on' by the cameraman. New cameramen are welcome.

"Other activities have included experimental filming from the C.R. tube of an oscilloscope, using Kodachrome and colour filters. It is hoped to produce an abstract film on these lines in the near future. We are also searching for another unusual script to follow *Headline*. Several ideas have been suggested, but we feel they don't quite ring the bell. All shooting is temporarily held up due to our mechanically-minded member having our camera in lots of little pieces. He assures us he can put it all back together again, and the uninformed section of the unit can only wait hopefully for results."

South Kirkby and District A.C.S., one of the last clubs to present the 1952 Ten Best, report a very good reception for them. The local press were particularly enthusiastic, and members are hoping that better support will be given to future presentations as a result. It is hoped to produce a 9.5mm. film to be shot mainly around a local colliery. (Secretary, C. A. Mills, 8 Colliery Row, South Kirkby, Nr. Pontefract).

Newcastle and District A.C.A. recently presented the A.C.L. Top of the Ten Best programme to a large audience of members and visitors. The club's next presentation will be the A.C.W. 1953 Ten Best. (Hon. Sec., George Cummin, 143 Baywater Rd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2).

City Films K.S. (Sheffield) produced a film in under nine hours for the F.C.S.'s "Let's Make a Film" competition. An enthusiastic group of members recently visited a large London film studio and saw the processes involved in the production of a colour film. At a Whitson gala continuous film shows were given in a large marquee, and a local youth club benefited by over £12. (Hon. Gen. Sec., Miss C. Blythen, 388 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield, 7).

Erimus Research Group held their half-yearly business meeting recently, and learnt from the Hon. Sec. that the past six months showed steady progress in membership and finances. All liabilities have now been met, and the club is once again in a sound financial position. A draft programme for the next twelve months was submitted and approved in principle, and a Programme and Publicity Secretary was appointed. Two parties of members recently went over the G.P.O. Telephone Exchange at Middlesbrough. (Hon. Sec., L. Sumner, 69 Ashford Avenue, Middlesbrough).

Forthcoming Shows

Edinburgh C.S. are to show *Scotland Salutes the Queen and Honours Threes* at the Central Hall,

Tollcross on 25th August, at 7.30 p.m. These films were made by twenty amateur cameramen during the Queen's visit to Edinburgh last year, and are claimed to be unique records of the highlights of the occasion. (Hon. Sec., William S. Dobson, 20 Barnshot Road, Edinburgh, 13).

New Clubs

R. Hennessy of 53 Belmont Road, Southampton, Hants., is hoping to form an 8mm. group locally, and invites anyone interested to write to him. Once the club is formed he hopes to organise a 16mm. section.

The J. & E. Hall Ltd., Dartford Camera Club (R.P.S.) are now branching out into cine after four successful years in still work. Their first meeting under their new title of the J. & E. Hall Ltd., Camera & Cine Club will be held on 27th Sept., when George Sewell will talk on "From Script to Screen." Most of the coming season's programmes will consist of F.C.S. programmes. (Secretary, John E. Flint, 29 Oakfield Park Road, Dartford, Kent).

The Kensington Film Group recently held their inaugural meeting, and encouraged by the enthusiasm shown, decided to go ahead. Details will be sent to anyone interested in joining. New members should contact the Hon. Sec., Miss Joan Langley, Langley Studios, 151 Notting Hill Gate, W.11.

The newly-formed **Hailsham** and District Photographic Society at present have only one 16mm. worker, who invites other cine addicts to join him. Write the Hon. Sec., S. H. Frank, 78A High Street, Hailsham, Sussex.

From the Magazines

The A.C.C. *Screen* (Journal of the Amateur Cine Club, Johannesburg): "We offer our heartfelt sympathy to anyone who emulates our over-zealous council member who carefully checked the packing of all the odds and ends necessary for a carefree week-end in Swaziland—exposure meter, tripod, haze filter, telephoto lens, two colour films, three children, one wife, one dog, toothbrushes. On arrival at Mbabane, perfect weather—and no camera!"

Melbourne 8mm. Movie Club Bulletin: "This really happened. A fellow in Melbourne took some cracker shots of the Royal Visit. In fact, he boasted that he had the best close-ups of the Queen that anyone could ever take. He carefully took the film out of the camera, placed it in the tin and then in the carton. He printed plainly on the carton 'From Mr. Blank to Kodak, Abbotsford' and dropped it in the post. He knew that Kodak were jammed up with Royal Visit films, but he hoped that his would come back promptly—and it did.

"Within two days it was in the letter-box. 'Smart work,' said his wife as she gathered the mail. She opened the carton on the front path and examined it. Nothing on it. The only smart work was by the Post Office, who had delivered the film to the sender instead of to Kodak!"

Balance sheet for 1953 published by the Australian A.C.S. in *Movie News* indicates the imposing size of this

organisation. Although its expenditure of £752 10s. resulted in a loss of £250 18s. 2d., the total value of its assets in £988 11s. 7d. Membership subscriptions rose to £355 8s. (In 1952 they stood at £297 1s. 6d.). Annual subscription is £2 5s. (£1 5s. for country/interstate members).

Christchurch Movie Club Magazine tells of a 100ft. colour film of the Royal Visit screened at the Club's opening night: "It was a warning to all who saw it... The shots themselves looked as if they might have helped to make a wonderful record of a happy occasion, but unfortunately, something had gone wrong in processing the film and three others that the owner had sent away at the same time being ruined. A Sellotape splice had come unstuck during the involved process, and 1,000ft. of film in this particular batch ruined, because someone had been stupid enough to send a film away in this condition without enclosing a warning note."

Another warning comes from *The Link*, the magazine of A.C.W. 9.5mm. Cine Circle No. 8: "Don't rely on a public collection at film shows. We put on a show for two nights and had packed houses both times. This meant that something like 300 people saw it, and we also put on a 6d. draw for a basket of fruit. The total raised from all this was only about £7, whereas if we had charged admission we should have realised something like £12."

With the Cannes Festival drawing swiftly nearer, we were particularly interested to receive *L'Ecran d'Azur*, the Bulletin of Cannes C.C. This well produced journal covers a wide field; articles in the current issue include "The Amateur Cinema in the Service of International Friendship," "Legal Protection of Photographic Work," details of the forthcoming UNICA conference, a "how I made it" feature, and a report on new equipment.

Sub-Standard (Official Organ of the Cine 8 Club, Durban) quotes from an indignant article in the local press on the action of foolhardy visitors to the Game Reserves: "Visitors, especially movie camera fans, who wished to see action, teased elephants by throwing stones, oranges, bottles, crackers and other things, and then sped away when an elephant charged. A father was seen to send his son into the bush to collect stones for pelting lions. An elephant has been tickled in the ribs with a fishing rod."

A vigorous protest about the reception given to his own experimental production is made by a member of City Films K.S. (Sheffield) in the club's magazine, *Outline*. Pleading for a more sensible approach to unorthodox films, he writes: "It struck me that the reception accorded *Metamorphosis* was not just cold but belligerently critical—or to put it another way, it was 'picked on'. Allowing for the traditional Yorkshire bluntness (doubtless practical, but I feel that not all its users are alive to its dangers), I must record a protest against the cynical attitude adopted by many, the several facetious remarks, the subsequently loudly proclaimed vocal opinions and the film's dismissal as 'very disappointing' in the last *Outline*. There was only one word of valid criticism from the roomful of spectators."

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Sound Recording Convention

The Annual Convention and Exhibition of the British Sound Recording Association is held every year towards the end of May, and this year, as usual, it offered a wealth of interest to amateur and professional alike. Twenty-five major manufacturers showed and demonstrated their latest wares (in rotation). These "side by side" demonstrations are a unique feature of B.S.R.A. exhibitions.

Besides professional exhibits, amateur members of the Association had provided a most interesting display of home-made apparatus, ranging from an ingenious pick-up arm to a complete tape/film sync. system. The prize for the best exhibit, an extremely well-made oscilloscope, was won by a member of the B.S.R.A. Amateur Constructors Circle, which meets fortnightly in Central London for the exchange of ideas, data and practical help. A simplified audio test oscillator designed by members of the circle was also on view.

Of particular interest to the amateur cine enthusiast was the latest version of the Wearite Ferrograph tape recorder. This includes a synchronous capstan motor which allows tape timing to an accuracy of 5 seconds in 30 minutes, provision for 1,750ft. reels lasting 45 minutes and means for superimposing speech on top of previously recorded music merely by coupling a 5,000 ohm variable resistance across two contacts at the back of the recorder. Excellent recording volume indication is provided by a peak reading meter in a special circuit.

Ingenious System

The Leavers-Rich Professional tape recorder is something most cine amateurs would wish to possess. Besides being a superb engineering job, it incorporates Norman Leavers' ingenious Synchropulse system, which recently won for him the professional world's Arthur Newman Memorial Prize. In this system, a contact on the film camera records a tone pulse once per frame on a second track on the tape. As each pulse bears the same relationship to the sound track as the frame lines bear to the picture image, synchronising is in no way affected by the actual speed of recording or tape slip or stretch.

The selected take is usually re-recorded on to film for editing purposes, when the pulse from the tape is compared on a double beam cathode ray tube with the pulse from a frame contact on the S.O.F. recorder and vernier adjustments of tape recorder speed made manually by altering the field current to the D.C. spirit motor driving the capstan. The whole recorder runs from a 12 volt 6 amp accumulator and is completely transportable.

The M.S.S. Co. had a high quality deck available both separately and built up with amplifier. Features of interest are the positive solenoid operated band brakes for the reels, and an arrangement of the fast forward/rewind switch which allows easy manipulation of the

tape for word spotting. Also available (to special order) is a solenoid operated pressure roller allowing remote control. The company also exhibited samples of the new tape they have just produced.

Grundig showed their new 28lb. lightweight TK9 recorder. This is a smaller version of the 700L Reporter, having one tape speed of 3½ in./sec. and intended mainly for home and office dictation use. The TK9 uses a new 850ft. reel which lasts for 45 minutes, and at the end of this time it is possible immediately to reverse and continue recording to 90 minutes on the lower half track, while a new type "clock" footage indicator allows surprisingly accurate logging of programmes.

Cine Bookshelf

SPORTSTER GUIDE (By A. J. Surgenor, Focal Press, 7s. 6d.). This book is a concise guide to filming on 8mm. film, describing fully the various sportster models, both English and American, listing all the available lenses and advising on handling and general manipulation. The rest of the book contains sections on *The Technique of Focus*, with special reference to the T.T. & H. lenses; *Film For Your Camera*; *The Technique of Filters*; *The Technique of Exposure*; *Special Effects*; *Motion Picture Technique*; *Filming in Colour*; and, *Taking Care of your Camera*.

The same pattern as that of the author's book on the Bolex cameras, has been adopted and, indeed, some of the material is identical in the two books. But there are a number of improvements and corrections, including those suggested in our review of the earlier work.

One interesting diagram, though its value is weakened by being out of scale, illustrates filming speeds. Another is the illustration of the T. T. & H. depth of field indicator, showing typical camera and subject positions.

The few shortcomings of the book lie in minor mis-prints and omissions: for example, though f/1.4 lenses are listed, this stop is omitted from the last table on page 63. The section on Exposure Meters, though improved in comparison with the Bolex book, is still incorrect: the reader is advised to point his meter at the brightest part of the subject and expose for that, whereas he should point it at a key tone; or point at an artificial highlight and use a modified reading, as explained in Smethurst's and Dunn's books. A useful compendium of basic filming lore.

COMEDY FILMS by John Montgomery (George Allen & Unwin, 21s.).

"This is a factual and not a critical account of the history and traditions of the comic film", states the author's foreword, and bearing this self-imposed limitation in mind, it can certainly be said that this book is an admirably comprehensive work. With equal respect for the pioneers and the clowns of today, Mr. Montgomery traces the story of screen comedy throughout the industry's history, explaining

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Readers' reactions to the book are likely to vary according to their age. Those who know few or none of the earlier films mentioned will probably find a tendency to catalogue-like monotony occasionally creeping into the pages, though they will undoubtedly prize the book as a reference work. But readers who can recall the days of the great silent comedies will find it completely absorbing.

Now and again the critic in the author pushes the historian aside to make a rather dogmatic assertion (e.g., "nobody could describe the noisy antics of Martin and Lewis as real clowning. They are a vaudeville knockabout team, specializing in loud microphone humour, and they would not have lasted two minutes in the Keystone days."). But for the most part the factual emphasis is maintained. Not the least of the book's virtues are its stills, most of which are apt and unhackneyed, and its invaluable indices of films and personalities.

ROYAL VISIT

G.B.'s film of the *Royal Visit to Fiji and Tonga* is now available in 16mm. (400ft.) and 8mm. (200ft.) versions, the only difference between the two being that the 16mm. version bears a sound track. The fact that the 8mm. version remains self-explanatory without the aid of any sub-titles is a tribute to the skill of cameramen and editor alike.

The film is cut from Movietone's record of the visit. Camera angles are remarkably well chosen; the emphasis throughout is on the Queen. There is never any confusion, as there has been in some versions, as to whether she or the islands are the real subject. We are treated to an excellent array of shots which really feature the royal couple, and the attractive colour, though a little variable, enhances the delightful settings.

The commentary to the 16mm. version is informative and dignified, and is an undoubted asset to the film, but you need to dote on the Hawaiian guitar if you are to stand up to the nerve-wracking persistence of the whines and wails. Certainly it was a bright idea to use native music (or the European version of the same) but one would have preferred all hands to the pomp, with ceremonial music to match the proud dignity of the theme. As it is, the 8mm. fan may well feel that he has come off best. Certainly there is little difference in screen quality between the two versions. (Colour, 16mm. £24, 8mm. £10 10s.; B. and W., 16mm. £10, 8mm. £3 15s.)

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(Continued from page 372)

To sum up, I can only suggest that whenever possible we should view films before buying them, and not hesitate to return any faulty prints to the dealer or distributor. The distributors are anxious to please, and it is up to us to demand a high standard.

END OF THE REEL

I have heard of two 8mm. Kodachrome films entered for the I.A.C. Competition that the judges were unable to project, because parts of the films were wider than others. If you too have suffered from faulty splitting, please let me know and I will take the matter up with the labs. Incidentally, I think the I.A.C. might have tried projecting these films on a M8R. "If at first, you don't succeed . . ."

I see that one of this year's American Ten Best is *A Switch in Time*, a 200ft., 8mm. Kodachrome film, made by the Los Angeles 8mm. Club. It has been blown up to 16mm. Kodachrome and its Revere Synchro-Tape sound has been transferred to 16mm. magnetic stripe, so that it can be included in the 1953 Top of the Ten Best programme. I am hoping that next year the I.A.C. will again circulate the A.C.L. films, so that we shall get a chance of judging the success of this "blowing-up" process.



The novel construction of the Lumaplak Lightweight Screen enables erection to be performed in a few seconds. It stands on its own feet on table or may be suspended from picture rail or hook. When not in use the stretchers fold behind top batten, roller clips to front of top batten and the feet fold parallel to top batten. Screen may be stored in its cardboard box.

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The inexpensive Bell and Howell 252 Monterey 8mm. camera, available in the U.S.A., is supplied with a 10mm. f/2.3 Super Comat fixed focus lens. The Zeiss Ikon Movikon 8, available in this country, also has a 10mm. lens. The usual focal length for an 8mm. camera lens is 12.5mm. or 13mm., and, although the 10mm. lens must be useful when filming indoors and space is cramped, I prefer the usual longer focus cine lens. It encourages one to take close-ups, and the more close-ups we take, the better!

A little girl was shown sitting on her mother's knee, listening to a bedtime story. Her obvious delight in the story and apparent unawareness of the camera would have made the sequence a charming one, even if the film had been silent—but Mr. Cyril Sage, the producer, achieved lip synch. with a home-made tape recorder and synch. device, somewhat similar to that used on the Excel recorder. He explained that any lack of perfect synch. was due to the difficulty of lip-reading (the sound was recorded after the picture), but if there were imperfections, they were too slight to worry me.

Mr. Sage insisted that sound on tape was not only much cheaper but gave much better quality than sound stripe—and his own films impressively backed up his argument. Certainly, if we can achieve results at all comparable to his by using a tape recorder, we need not worry about the lack of an 8mm. striped film projector.

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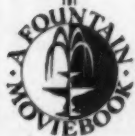
This book will, without question, repay its modest cost in saved film, besides doing much to prevent those disappointments which only too frequently accompany first ventures into cinematography. It is specifically aimed at the man starting in the hobby mainly with the idea of making family films, but it would be surprising if, after reading it, the novice was not fired to undertake work of wider application, for the text breathes inspiration, the enchantments that lie beyond mere cine-snapshotting and the methods of simply realizing them being fittingly introduced.

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CRITICISM? THEY CAN'T TAKE IT!

(Continued from page 351)

I, for one, am glad that there is to be a real vote this year. Last year not one nomination was received in advance, with the sorry result that the outgoing committee had to nominate its own successors. No vote was therefore required and the new committee took over with little enthusiasm.

Tonight, however, it is to be a different story. Plenty of nominations have been received, in writing and within the stipulated time. So, whoever gets elected, they will know that they at least enjoy the confidence of a majority of the members. My club, like many others in the London area, has now learnt the lesson that there is little future for film appreciation meetings. The National Film Theatre and television—both specialising in old films—have cornered this market so far as our part of the country is concerned.

One thing alone will keep our society in being and that is Film Production with a capital "F" and a capital "P". For too long now, our members have had to make do without, and I hope that, in time, we shall get back on the track. I rather favour the policy of clubs like Ace Movies and Stoke who sit down for a long while to think about films before they start their cameras turning. Both are old, well established clubs. That they are not in production for a year or more does not seem to worry them, and I personally feel that it should not worry a club such as my own—always provided, of course, that the feeling for films remains.

Tonight should settle the question. Are we to have a day-to-day policy or long term planning? There are divided opinions and printed ballot forms. Meanwhile, let's be sure C. isn't one of the scrutineers. He's also an amateur conjuror!

MY FIRST 50ft. OF 1/16mm.

(Continued from page 338)

definition will be available for subjects in the foreground.

Because the gate dimensions are smaller than usual, the angle of view is reduced in proportion. The useful frame height is only about 4mm. instead of 7mm., but correct perspective is restored if you use a 15mm. lens in place of the normal 25mm. Indoors I use a Berthiot wide angle attachment on my 25mm. lens. This gives an effective focal length of 12.5mm., which in 1/16mm. gives the same perspective as would normally result from the use of a 22mm. lens.

Any standard 16mm. film stock can be used in the camera. Presumably Mr. Atkinson used double-8mm. in order to get his film slit down the centre. With Kodak monochrome he would, of course, get the two sides compensated independently for exposure errors. Using 16mm., each side will tend to affect the other. If a shot on one side of the film is heavily underexposed, the adjacent shot on the other side will be "compensated" to produce a lighter picture

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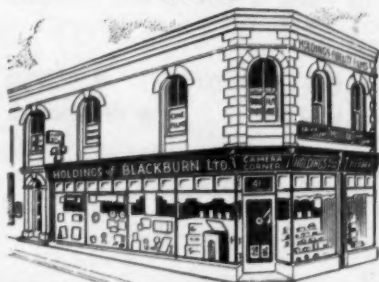
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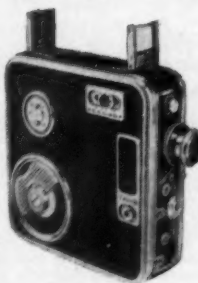
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than normal. If this "compensation" began or ended part-way through a shot, it could prove disturbing.

In general, however, the effect is not likely to be pronounced. Even if you leave part of one side completely unexposed, the compensation provided will only be that appropriate to a single-stop error. Since compensation is in any case incomplete, the maximum variation you need fear is equivalent to about a half-stop change of aperture during a shot. In practice, the only effect you are likely to notice is an apparent lack of compensation on underexposed shots, unless the whole film is underexposed.

No exposure compensation is provided with Kodachrome, so the question does not arise when you are working in colour. If you are using neg.-pos. for monochrome, you can, for a fractional increase in cost, have two prints made, each graded to suit one side of the negative only. In this case, of course, you would leave the prints unslit, running 16mm. through the projector, but throwing only half on the screen.

Projection of $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. seems to be the only real stumbling block. One could readily design a dual purpose projector intended to show both full- and $\frac{1}{2}$ -16mm. Nobody is likely to market such a machine until he feels assured of a ready sale. So in the meanwhile we must improvise. The erection of the picture is easily contrived by using two surface silvered mirrors. Making the half-width film behave properly is likely to be a little trickier.

For my first experiments I have dodged this problem by using neg.-pos. as described above. I feel pretty confident, however, that the slit film could be used with very little modification to the projector. I have devised a brass insert that should sit in the gate aperture of almost any machine and control the edge of the film to prevent weave and maintain focus. The 16mm. sprockets should be satisfactory as they stand, but additional or alternative guide rollers would be needed to provide lateral stability.

The attractions of this economy gauge are sufficient to justify quite a bit of fiddling to make it a success. When the necessary mechanics have been mastered, they will doubtless be described in these pages.

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SOUVENIR

(Continued from page 341)

paving. The result was quite staggering. I'm convinced that I couldn't have done better if I'd had a score of 8 f.p.s. shots to choose from.

The next 50ft. arrived back at this point; every inch of it was fogged. After screaming curses at Kodak for some while, I began to wonder whether I had enclosed my usual note mentioning that the film had been used in a Siemens cassette and was therefore loose in the can. I'm still not sure about it—which probably means I'm guilty.

The fogging was bad, but plenty could still be seen. I was determined that Amabile should see what the finished film would look like, so I cut in the fogged material with the rest of the film. There was still another 50ft. to come back, but I had to get on with recording. I decided to cut in lengths of leader in place of the missing shots and use the result as a guide to the timing of the recording. I marked another length of leader in seconds, measured off the film against it, and noted the time each new sentence, effect or disc should begin and end. With the help of a colleague on A.C.W. I ploughed furiously ahead, recording everything piece by piece in its correct order.

The only exceptions were two recordings I had made at home the previous week-end. One was of the roar of traffic—easily obtained from my fifth floor balcony which overlooks a busy crossroads; the other was of Amabile saying, "Dear Mama, I am beginning to like the English; and it seems as if the English are beginning to like me." This begins over the postcard shot described earlier and, after a couple of shots during the pause, conclude on Amabile strolling past a man who gives her an appreciative glance. (Yes, you've guessed it; blessings on the automatic running lock!)

After splicing these two recordings in their appropriate positions, and continuing with commentary and music my friend announced, slightly flushed, that he had erased the last two words of Amabile's sentence. Somehow bloodshed was avoided. I spent a frantic few minutes letting out a series of "like me"s in my best approximation of feminine tones. After a little jiggery-pokery with Sellotape, the result would have just about passed muster as a recording fault.

It would be pleasant to be able to say that, thanks to all my paper work on the timing, synchronisation was perfect at the first run through. But it wasn't; there could have been all sorts of reasons. We cut in a few lengths of silence at appropriate places until a sufficient degree of synchronisation was obtained. A few frames difference on each projection was unavoidable, which meant that the only effect which *had* to be exact—a ringing alarm clock—was better out than in. A hand switching the alarm off makes the scene visually obvious, so it didn't matter a great deal.

By now I only wanted that last 50ft. to replace the lengths of leader. I was so convinced that

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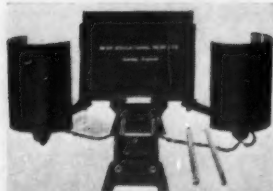
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the Fates were against me that I could hardly believe it when the reel arrived on the morning of the Saturday I was to show the film to Amabile. There was a nasty moment when I found that I had over-estimated the length of one shot, but luckily it came very early in the film. By letting the introductory music run a couple of seconds longer before I switched on the projector, sync. was still all right.

The afternoon should have been spent retaking all the fogged shots of Amabile, so that I could complete the final version of the film after her departure. A thunderstorm was nearly the last twist of the knife, but in the one brief interlude in the rain I managed to get the only three shots that showed her face. A double will be called upon in due course for the rest.

Then came the test; I had run through the film a couple of times in the morning, ensuring everything was in order. "Amabile," I announced with pride as I rewound the film, "here it is." I laced up a little nervously, switched on the recorder, timed the introductory music, switched on the projector—and "The End" appeared upside down. In my anxiety I had rewound the film twice . . .

But the film was certainly appreciated. And all that remains for me to do now is to retake the titles (which aren't too good) and the rest of the fogged shots, learn how to deliver a commentary so that it doesn't sound like the voice of doom, re-record the whole thing at more leisure, and shake off the sensation that I'm being followed by an old man with a scythe.

But is the film *really* any good? I've just shown this rather rough-and-ready version to the Editor. He sat through it in silence, made only a few comments afterwards, suggesting a cut here, a trim there—we of A.C.W. are much more ruthless about each other's films than ever we are of yours—and then got up to go. But his final comment at the door is, I hope, oblique approval: "You ought to tell readers just how you made this film. You could begin like this, maybe . . . 'When A. announced that she was going home to Italy in three weeks, I found myself in the familiar situation of wanting to produce a film in an absurdly short time . . .'"

COMPETITION CHANGES

There are several changes in the rules of the I.A.C.'s 1954 Amateur Film Competition, for which entry forms are now available. Closing date has been put back to 31st Dec., 1954 and professional assistance is now limited to processing, titling and optical recording. Wire, tape and magnetic recording must be the work of the producer.

Individual members of affiliated societies are no longer eligible for awards limited to I.A.C. members. Conditions for the award of the Twyford Cup for the best non-sync. accompaniment are now extended to cover music in a sound-film entry. The H. A. Rowe Trophy is to be presented to "the best documentary of a craft or occupation," and not limited to "my job" as in previous years.

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HOLIDAY IN CORNWALL

(Continued from page 362)

important that no footmarks other than his appeared on the expanse of sand—which meant more planning!

Again I wanted plenty of shots from varying angles and distances, so I explained that when I had finished taking each shot he was to remain perfectly still in order not to disturb the sand around him. After filming his approach to the dunes, I panned along his footmarks until he was in the foreground of the picture with the sand-hill rising steeply in the background. He stopped, I made a detour up the side of the hill and he started climbing again while I took medium shots and telephoto close-ups.

This routine was repeated over and over again, until I noticed that the sand would soon be slipping from under the boy's feet. I made my way around the hill to a spot where I could get shots of the fall, which I took twice, once in medium shot and once in telephoto close-up. I took especial care in editing this sequence, and managed to get smooth continuity.

I paid particular attention to camerawork throughout the film, trying to make the colour of foreground and background equally attractive. My Bolex H16 with turret head helped me here, of course, and I found the 3in. telephoto lens excellent for close-ups taken at a distance. I focused all shots through the lens before taking the picture, and used a tripod throughout.

For filming near the sea or over stretches of bright sand, I find that using an Invercone attachment with a Weston meter gives the best results, and I relied on it throughout the film. I took a great number of close-ups, which proved invaluable in editing.

The titles were stencilled by my son on stiff cream paper. I painted in a few seagulls with Indian ink, and we bound the sheets in a red folder. A hand turned them one by one to disclose each title in turn during the course of the film, but I kept their number down to what I considered to be the minimum. The general effect is that of the typical snapshot album—an effect which, I think, echoes the theme of the film.

I discarded 75ft. of the 450ft. shot to give the picture smoother continuity. Several shots had to be cut to a particular frame for the effects I needed but the results were well worth the trouble. Besides, I found this one of the most absorbing of the tasks involved, and I was pleasantly surprised at the way in which the film slowly became a smooth record. It will always be a happy reminder of an enjoyable holiday—and an enjoyable filming experience.

ADDED INCENTIVE

There's an even greater incentive for the holiday film maker to try and make his film something more than an animated snapshot album this year. Several holiday resorts are offering a cash award of £15 to any 1954 Ten Best winner shot in their locality. Have, Ilfracombe, Isle of Man, Teignmouth, Torquay and Worthing have so far made the offer—which is, of course, in addition to the handsome A.C.W. trophies.

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